# Tourist Tales of California

Sara White Isaman

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# Tourist Tales of California

By

Sara White Isaman

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TO MY FATHER
ROBERT ALEXANDER WHITE
I DEDICATE THIS
BOOK

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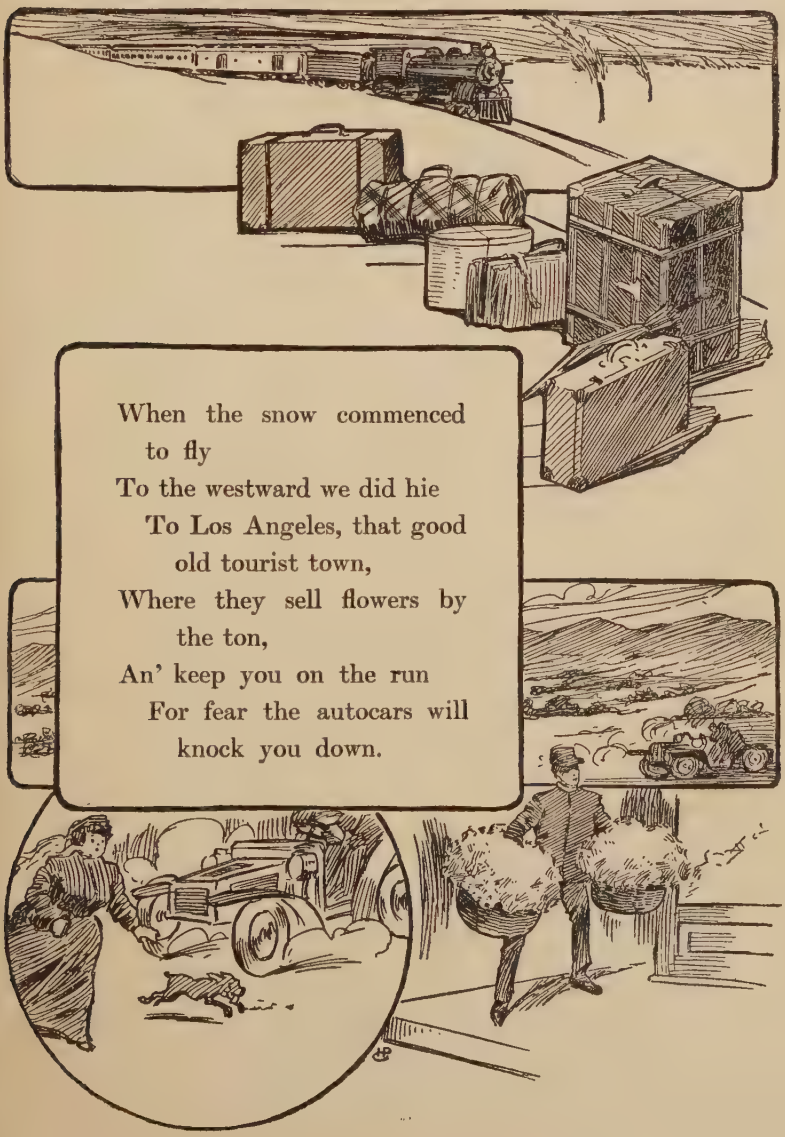
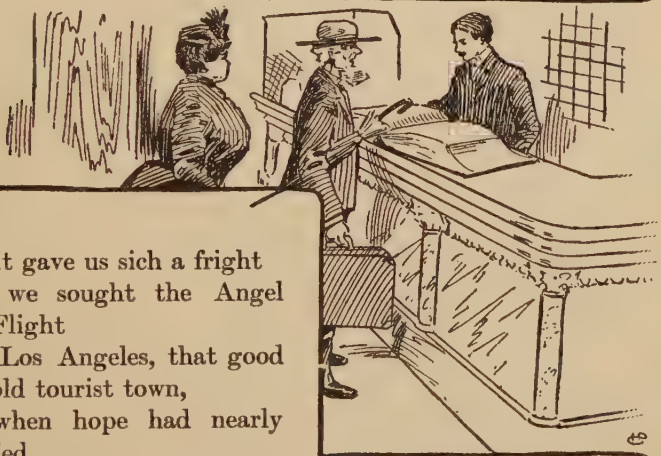
# LOS ANGELES
# THAT GOOD OLD TOURIST TOWN

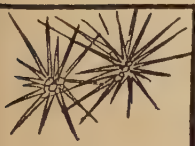


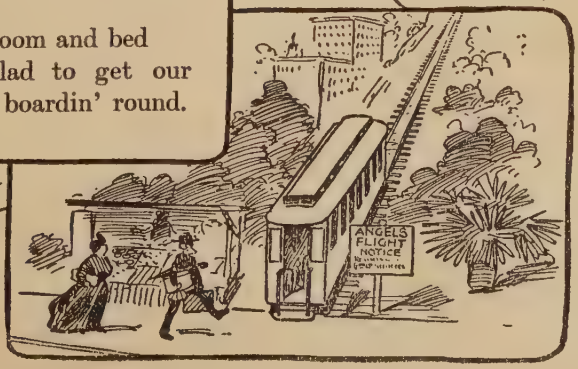
When the snow commenced
to fly
To the westward we did hie
To Los Angeles, that good
old tourist town,
Where they sell flowers by
the ton,
An' keep you on the run
For fear the autocars will
knock you down.

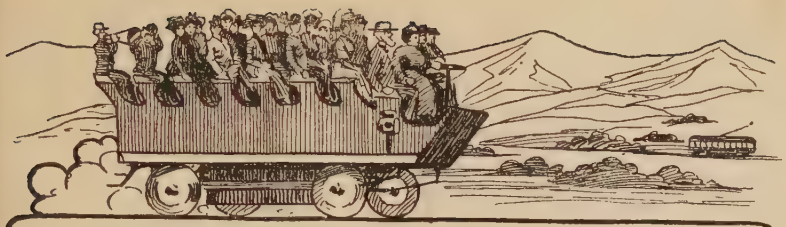
With our grips and umbrel
We sought a swell hotel
In Los Angeles, that good old tourist town,
Where the clerk jest give one peep
An' sized us up as cheap
An' said: "Our rates are ten per day, cash down."



Oh! it gave us sich a fright
That we sought the Angel Flight
In Los Angeles, that good old tourist town,
An' when hope had nearly fled
We found a room and bed
An' was glad to get our meals a boardin' round.







Then we felt so glad and free
We started out to see
Los Angeles, that good old tourist town;
From the ocean to Mount Lowe
Sight seein' we did go—
Rode them trolley cars fur miles and miles around.

When we go back frum here
Them nabors all shall hear
'Bout Los Angeles, that good old tourist town.
She's the world's playground all right,
And her flowers and sunshine bright
Makes you feel as young an' happy as a clown.

Uncle Hiram Hailed from Nebraska, but He Wanted to Be Shown and Was Game—Carriage Driver Represented Busch's Gardens as Sunken by Earthquake, Which Greatly Impressed Him.

## AT BUSCH'S GARDEN

"JUST set down in that rocker, Mandy," said Aunt Pheba Harrison to her niece, "an' I'll tell you about our trip to California, while I unpack this trunk. I bet a cookie them souvenirs got all smashed," she added as she peered anxiously into the trunk.

"One day last fall a real estate agent come out from Lincoln an' offered us fifty thousand dollars for our farm. Hiram wouldn't think of sellin' at any price, but he says: 'I'll tell ye, Pheba, what we will do; we will take a rest an' let somebody else do the work after this. I want to travel some an' the first place I want to see is California.' So we went. My! but it seemed to me that everybody an' his wife had taken a sudden notion to go to California just because we had. Some folks we knew went in a tourist car an' we used to go back an' stay with them a spell every day just for

a change. Seemed to me all they thought of in that car was to eat.

"They had a stove fixed so you could make coffee an' bake potatoes, an' then the porter would set up little tables to eat from, in front of the seats. One big fellow spent most of his time eatin' an' kept his tired-lookin' wife, who wore a blue calico Mother Hubbard, cookin' as if he never had anything to eat in Nebraska and never expected to get anything in California. I don't think much of the country between here an' California, except little spots around Denver an' Salt Lake City. Saw some Mormon houses around there built so you could tell how many wives a man had by countin' the new rooms that had been added to the main part—every time he got a new wife he built a new room.

"We made our first stop at Los Angeles. When Hiram registered at the hotel, 'Hiram Harrison an' wife, Lincoln, Nebraska,' the man behind the desk smiled, an' said: 'From Bryan's state, I see;' an' Hiram, lookin' half a foot taller, answered: 'Yes, sir; from the same state, county an' township; in fact, my

farm corners with his'n an' a better neighbor I never had.' The folks seemed real interested to hear Hiram tell about being a neighbor to 'the greatest man in America today,' as one man put it.

"We don't seem to think much about it here livin' so close to him, but there's lots of folks out there thinks he is goin' to be President of the United States, next time—if the Republicans don't snow him under again.

"When the clerk showed us our room it felt real chilly. The clerk said they hadn't started the furnace yet, but we could use the stove. When we saw the stove we both laughed; it wasn't a bit bigger than our coffee pot; beats all what little stoves they use out there; looked like a case of too much stovepipe, but it het up all right. We just rented a room at this hotel an' et our meals wherever we happened to be, when we were out sight-seeing; so Hiram says to the clerk: 'I'm hungry as a wolf—tell me where I'll find the best eatin' place in town.' The clerk told him Leevies or some such name an' there we went. I told Hiram I guessed it was real expensive, but he 'lowed as long as

Bryan et there it couldn't be very high, bein's how he always set down on anything over a dollar when they used to make big dinners for him. 'Besides,' says Hiram, 'if 'twas very high priced they would have a kitchen 'stead of cookin' in the front room to save rent.' As luck would have it, I left my glasses in my satchel in our room, an' Hiram left his'n in his overcoat, so we couldn't see a thing on the bill-o-fare or men-you, as they called it.

"So we told the waiter we knowed what we wanted, without readin' it off from a printed paper. So Hiram says: 'Pheba, let's have a dinner just like we would have in Nebraska on the Fourth of July, seein' they have so much garden sass an' fruit in this country.'

" 'All right,' I said; and he ordered soup an' fish an' salads an' cucumbers an' mushrooms an' fried chicken an' cherry pie an' puddin' an' some things he didn't know the names of, but saw others eatin'. I told him not to be so reckless, but he said he guessed folks from Nebraska could eat what the rest of the world et; so I didn't say any more, seein' how

"'Besides,' says Hiram, 'if 'twas very high priced they would have a kitchen 'stead of cookin' in the front room to save rent.'"

he was enjoyin' it, especially that green corn on the cob; really, I was kind of ashamed of it, for I guess he et eight or ten ears. Mandy, that dinner cost us ten dollars an' twenty-five cents; but your Uncle was game—after the first gasp of astonishment, he paid it like it was the usual thing; but I noticed he didn't ask any more for the very best eatin' places.

" 'The next place we et at, or tried to, was at a cafeteria. I found it when I went out for a walk an' Hiram didn't know exactly where he was goin', or what he was goin' to do. I says: 'Now Hiram, you just watch me an' do just exactly what I do.' Well, I got my handkerchief out an' tucked it 'n my belt, an' bless you if he didn't yank out his handkerchief an' tuck it under his vest. It looked so funny hangin' down in front of him, that I laughed an' that made him mad; beats all how men hate to be laughed at when they do something funny. When it come to gettin' the trays, an' grabbin' silverware an' such, he got so rattled, he said 'Yes,' to everything they offered him to eat, till he couldn't get anything

else on his tray. Then we started for an empty table, Hiram carryin' the tray on one hand as high as his head.

"My! It was awful! I sometimes dream of seein' that tray wabblin' in the air yet, an' seein' them victuals, boiled cabbage, custard an' gravy, come slidin' down on top of that oldish man's bald head, as he sat at a table eatin' his dinner. At first he only bowed his head to the avalanche of dishes an' victuals, but when a pot of hot tea come whizzin' along an' struck him plump on the back of his fat neck, he must of jumped two-foot straight up into the air. There are some nice folks in the world; for that poor man acted like a hero, an' begged me not to be distressed. As for Hiram, he never looked back, but fled toward the door, almost upsettin' the folks in his way. Some of the folks had manners enough not to laugh, but as for the rest of them—well, mebby some of them are laughin' yet. If you want to see your Uncle real mad just say cafeteria to him.

"The next day we went to Pasadena. He made me real ashamed again. As we went

whizzin' round a corner, he yelled out: 'Stop the car, somebody's goin' to git murdered; woman's got a razor back there.' He acted so scairt they stopped the car, an' when Hiram pointed back to the place, the conductor said: 'You old Hayseed, didn't you never see a lady barber before?'

"Exceptin' for that episode, I enjoyed the ride between Pasadena an' Los Angeles real well. My! when I get tired of the prairie I can just shut my eyes an' think of them green hills, purtier than any I ever see painted in any picture; it's a shame to have them big billboards stuck all over them—but then I will say this much, they are about the neatest billboards I ever see—some of them had pretty birds an' flowers, an' sheep; an' one had a boat an' water painted on it.

"When we got to Pasadena, we found a lot of carriages waitin' for us—how in the world they knowed we were tourists an' wanted to take a ride is past me, but they did; Hiram kicked on the price till one jolly lookin' fellow agreed to take us a quarter of a dollar apiece cheaper than the others. I saw him wink at the others

like as if he thought Hiram was pretty close, but at last we got started.

"'Now,' says Hiram, 'I'm payin' you to tell me things as well as for this ride, so you just work your jaw a little an' earn them two dollars, will you?'

"'What fur place is this?' he asked.

"'That,' said the driver, lookin' sober round the mouth, but his black eyes twinklin', 'is the famous Tourist Club of Pasadena. No one can belong to it that plays cards, smokes or chews, or tells yarns; an' besides it costs a hundred dollars a year to belong.'

"'Humph,' said Hiram, eyeing it with disapproval, 'couldn't run a place like that in Nebraska a week less twas fur a passel of old women.'

"'This place,' says the driver, pointin' to a kind of a hilly lookin' piece of land, 'is the place John D. Rockefeller is offerin' to the doctor that will cure him of dyspepsia an' baldness at the same time.'

"'We are now on the Orange Grove drive, said to be the finest street in the world,' went on the driver as we turned the corner.

"'Where's the orange groves?' said Hiram lookin' round.

"By this time the driver spoke again, sayin': 'Look to your right, an' you will see the Busch's Famous Sunken Gardens.'

"'What sunk 'em?' says Hiram.

"The driver looked kind of startled an' said: 'Why, the earthquake of course—stood up as level as a floor before that.'

"'Wal, wal!' says Hiram, 'I wouldn't a missed this fur the price of the ride; ruined all his garden truck, too, I reckon; don't see nothin' but grass, flowers an' sich.'

"'Sure,' answered the driver."

Uncle Hiram Has a Strenuous Day in Pasadena, and Finally Becomes Incredulous About the Safety Balloon Attachment on the Mt. Lowe Railway—Experiences Some Difficulty Over His First Tamale and Is Justly Indignant at "Shell Games."

## AT MT. LOWE

"LET'S see, Mandy, where was I, when your Uncle Hiram come home for dinner, an' stopped us talkin' about California?" said Mrs. Harrison. "Oh, yes," she continued, after a moment's thought, "we were out takin' a carriage ride in Pasadena. Well, the driver stopped the horses up on a high point so we could get a good view of Mt. Lowe. Mt. High would have been a better name for it, seems to me. 'How in the world do they ever get up there?' said Hiram, 'an' how in creation they ever got the lumber up there to build that Tavern beats me.'

" 'They have a car, run on cables, that hauls you up, nearly straight in the air for five thousand feet,' answered the driver. 'S'posen the cable would break?' says I. It seemed pretty scary business to me. 'Oh, they have that fixed all right,' he answered. 'They have

a lot of gas stored under the car, an' when a cable breaks it opens a valve, an' in a jiffy a balloon is filled with gas; the balloon is fastened to the top of the car with ropes, so there you are held safe an' sound till the cable is fixed. Safest place in the world outside your own bed.'

"'Well,' says Hiram, greatly interested, 'if that's the way she works, we'll take that trip some day.' Then he showed us where the big searchlight was, away up on the side of a mountain, an' told us about it, sayin': 'They can throw that light all over Southern California; one minute they will be spyin' out the sights at Redlands an' Riverside, an' the next they will be lookin' over Los Angeles an' Long Beach, it works so fast. Grandest searchlight you ever saw.'

"'What in creation are they searchin' fur, anyway?' asked Hiram.

"'Why,' answered the driver, 'that's the way they find out how big the tourist crop is.'

"On our way back, he showed us some old trees—'bout the oldest of any thereabouts.

"'What sort of trees be they?' we asked.

" 'Date palms,' he answered.

" 'Date back very fur?' asked Hiram, tryin' to be funny.

" 'Quite a spell,' he answered, lookin' as tho' he was thinkin' hard, 'but I forget whether they was planted in 1771 or 1871.'

"Just before we got out of the carriage, Hiram said: 'Now, are you sure you've showed us all the curiosities we're entitled to see, fur a a two dollar ride?'

" 'There's one right there, you ain't seen,' says he, pointin' his buggy whip at a woman on the sidewalk, across the street.

" 'Who, that woman?' says Hiram. 'She ain't no curiosity; country's overrun with 'em out here. What's wrong with her?'

" 'She stammers,' answered the driver.

" 'Well, what ef she does?' said Hiram, 'I've seen lots of folks that stutters.'

" 'Ever hear a woman stutter? Honor bright, old man, did you ever?' asked the driver.

"Hiram hates to give in, but he finally had to own up that all the women he ever had any

dealin's with had their talkin' apparatus in good workin' order.

"After we got out of the carriage, Hiram spied a news stand, where it said you could get all your 'home papers.' When your Uncle found the one he wanted, the newsdealer told him it was ten cents.

" 'Ten cents!' echoed Hiram, 'this is a regular hold-up; keep your old paper. I hain't a fool if I be a tourist!'

"He hunted all over the town an' at last he give it up an' came back to the place where I was waitin' for him. Here a small boy, who had been an interested listener to the conversation Hiram had with the newsdealer, said softly, as he sidled up to us: 'Mister, here's your home paper fur a nickel.'

"Your Uncle took it, lookin' as pleased over savin' that nickel as if his wheat was turnin' out forty bushels to the acre, or he had 'topped the market' with a load of fat cattle in South Omaha. He hurried me into a little station where they take the street cars for Los Angeles. We got seats, an' after he had read for 'bout half an hour, he give a sigh of content

an' says: 'Seems awful good to read a paper fresh from home once more.' 'Any news from our neighborhood?' says I.

" 'Why, yes,' he says, huntin' the place an' readin' out loud: 'Old Settlers have their picnic in More's Box Elder Grove next Tuesday; Hen Scott lost four hogs, drivin' them to market Monday mornin'. Thermometer stood for three hours Monday afternoon at 100 above zero, in the shade.' 'Great Guns!' says Hiram, 'an' California braggin' about it bein' eighty. Nebraska can beat the—'

" 'Hiram Harrison!' says I, interruptin' him, for I know it is a long wait when he gets to blowin' about Nebraska. 'What's the date of that paper?' He looked at the date an' then at me, kind o' dazed like, through his specks. The paper was six months old.

"Well, we was gettin' hungry by this time an' as the driver had been tellin' us about tamales, we thought we'd try 'em; 'twould be something new to tell the neighbors 'bout when we got back home. We hadn't either of us seen, much less et one; so when the darkey put them down in front of us on a plate, with an-

other plate in between us, we hadn't the least notion where we was to tackle 'em fust. I tried to cut mine through the middle, but the knife was so dull it was slow work. Hiram took his in both hands like he eats green corn on the cob. He took a bite—bit hard, too, but he didn't do a thing but yank his false teeth out on his plate. He's sensitive about them teeth, an' you ought to a seen him clap 'em back in his mouth, an' look around to see if anyone was lookin' our way.

"'Pheba,' he says, 'let's get out of here an' get something we can eat without breakin' a jaw.' Just then a darkey waiter who had been watchin' us with the whites of his eyes rollin' around in his head, come up an' showed us how to undo the things.

"Then, when he had scraped out the kernel, as Hiram called it, he poured over it a little pitcher full of something that looked like ketch-up—we found out after we had et it, though, that it was mostly red pepper. It nearly burned us to death, an' I'll bet we drunk a quart of water afterwards. 'No more dago grub for me,' says Hiram. After we left the restaurant,

I went to look for souvenirs, an' of course your Uncle had to tag along an' bother me. He always acts mean when I get on a souvenir hunt, as he calls 'em; it ain't so much the money as it is he's afraid I'll make him lug 'em around. There were some things in a curio store that I thought was real cute; one was a box of oranges, not much bigger than marbles; real oranges, too, in little boxes, all packed ready to send away. The other was a horned toad put between two pieces of bread just like a real sandwich. Of course it was only meant for a joke, but your Uncle never could see a joke, an' besides his mouth was burning awful from eatin' that tamale, so at first glance he thought it really was to eat, an' a madder man you never saw.

"'Fix up something else smart to nearly kill folks with, will you?' he yelled at the man who was showin' them to me. 'S'pose you would come back to Nebraska an' we'd fix up grasshopper sandwiches to sell you, an' little wormy apples at a quarter a box, an' cornmeal an' cayenne pepper tied up in corn shucks, to burn the livers outen you?'

"The man who had 'em to sell was too astonished to answer; guess he thought your Uncle had a 'brain storm' if he wa'n't actually crazy. Anyway, I got him out on the sidewalk an' after we had seen some movin' pictures up the street aways, he got in a better humor an' I thought I'd try it again.

"We went into another store—never saw so many pretty curios as they had there. I bought the Mission, poppy and poinsettia pillows there. I could have stayed in there all afternoon, but Hiram kept edgin' toward the door, an' a-hurryin' of me up. Just as we was leavin' the clerk called me back an' says: 'We have a little novelty here I want to show you. It is called Pasadena in a nutshell.' An' sure enough, there was a lot of little pictures of Pasadena in an ordinary lookin' English walnut shell, that shut an' opened as cute as you please.

"Your Uncle Hiram is a little hard of hearin', so he didn't hear what the clerk said to me, but he caught sight of the shell and yelled out: 'No, you don't come any of your shell games on us! Take me fur a regular greenhorn, do

you? Wasn't I flimflammed out of ten dollars in a shell game at the State Fair once by jest such a sharper as you?'

" 'Pheba, he'd a flimflammed you sure if I hadn't a ben along to protect you,' he said, as he hurried me into the street. An' to this day I can't make Hiram think any different.

"About midnight, I woke an' found Hiram restless an' wideawake. 'What ails you?' says I. 'Nothin',' he answered. 'Only I was tryin' to figger out how they got that balloon filled with gas quick enough to ketch that car on Mt. Lowe. Say, Pheba, I wonder if that driver man could a-lied a little?' 'I wonder, too,' I answered as I trailed off to sleep again."

Uncle Hiram Objects to Too Much Realism in Personal Description and Aunt Pheba Finds It Hard to Describe Her Own Husband—In and Out of a Bathing Suit—The Way of the Long Beach Flea Is Past Finding Out.

## AT LOS ANGELES

"DID I ever tell you, Mandy, 'bout me an' your Uncle gettin' lost from each other in Los Angeles? No; well we did, as lost as the 'Babes in the Woods.' The hotels were all full when we got there, except one or two of them high-priced ones. We went to one an' looked at the rooms, but when the clerk told us they charged ten dollars a day, Hiram told him he wouldn't give that much a day for the whole tavern.

"A man who saw us huntin' round, told us about some nice rooms clos't to a restaurant, out Westlake way. Hiram went out to see 'em, an' likin' them furstrate, come back an' got the satchels an' things. I wasn't quite ready to go, as I had broke one of the glasses in my specks an' was gettin' it mended. So Hiram gave me a card with the number of the house an' the name of the street on it, an' told me to give it

to the street car conductor an' he would put me off the right place. When I started to get on the car an hour later, I got mixed up in an automobile an' street car accident an' come nigh gettin' killed. I wan't hurt a mite, but when I come to look for that card it had disappeared. I guess I spent a half hour goin' up an' down that street a-huntin' for it. Bye an' bye, a policeman spied me an' asked what was wrong. I've heard folks laugh an' say, 'tell your troubles to the policeman,' but that was the time I was mighty glad of the chance, an' him so nice about it, too. He advised me to go into a drug store, an' watch the street an' mebby Hiram would come lookin' for me, an' in the meantime he would keep a lookout for him, too; if neither of us see him in an hour, he would take me to the police station, where 'twas more'n likely we would hear from him. Then he asked me for a description of Hiram. Say, Mandy, did you ever try to write a description of some of your own family? Well, jest you try it sometime an' see how funny it reads. I thought I knew Hiram Harrison if I ever knowed anyone, but this was the best I could

do: 'Hiram Harrison; past middle age; smallish like; walks tired from havin' corns on left toes; squints right eye an' has large black mole on lobe of left ear; bald spot on top of head; wore salt an' pepper suit an' red necktie.'

"Well, neither of us saw anything of Hiram, so the policeman took me to the station; pretty soon the telephone (real near me) rang, an' I could hear Hiram's voice plain as day. He always yells into a telephone like as if 'twas a lung tester. I used to tell him, if he would stand out in the yard an' holler as loud as he does into the telephone, the neighbors could hear him for miles around, an' we'd save a telephone bill. The man who answered the 'phone said: 'All right; jest give me a description;' an' I heard sich scraps as this: 'Oldish woman; fat; false teeth; number six shoes; had a bunnet on with something stickin' up in front, an' something thin floppin' down the back.' The man at the 'phone looked at me an' smiled; an' said: 'All right; I guess we've got her.' It meant me all right, an' glad as I was at bein' found, I was mad clear

through at Hiram a-describin' of me that way. I reckon a woman never lives long enough to get used to bein' called old, an' I never wear number sixes only when he buys my shoes. He's so close he always gets all he can of anything, if it don't cost any more. Pretty soon Hiram come; seems the policeman that brought me to the station had spotted him all right from my description, for he held the paper in his hand an' after we got settled in our room he put on his specks an' read it. My! but he was mad as a hornet, an' says: 'What ye mean givin' such a crazy description of me as this to that policeman? Couldn't rest 'thout spreadin' it round all over Los Angeles 'bout that mole on my ear; that bald spot seems to hurt you too. Did ye reckon perlicemen ain't got nothin' to do but to stan' round snatchin' off men's hats to see if they are bald-headed? Corns nothin'!' he snorted, as he read on; 'didn't tell him, I reckon, I was loaded down within an inch of my life, luggin' round them old satchels stuffed with souvenirs an' shirtwaists? From this writeup, folks would think I was some little squinty runt, totterin' like's

if I was walkin' on eggs with my feet kivered with corns, an' a mole on my ear as big as a pertater; if this truck had cum out in the papers, describin' of me, I'd left the country. You have taught me a lesson tho, Pheba, an' I'll have it understood here an' now that when my obituary is writ, there ain't agoin' to be no such mess of facts dished up to be printed in no paper. No, siree; I'll write it myself an' I'll bet a cookie I can describe Hiram Harrison, Esq., 'thout bringin' up every mole an' squint an' corn he ever had.' Exceptin' that spat, we had a real good time out Westlake way; but after a while, Hiram took a notion he wanted to go to Long Beach. That's the place to have fun; they call it the Coney Island of the Pacific. I don't know anything about Coney, but I do know there's something doin' down at Long Beach most of the time. My first thought on wakin' in the mornin' was that I was back here an' them boomin' waves made me think 'twas goin' to be another windy day. 'Twas the first time either of us ever see the ocean an' our emotions would be hard to describe. Someway it give me the same lone-

some feelin' I had when I fust saw the prairie, stretchin' away an' away, to meet nothin' but the sky. But Hiram liked the place, an' took in everything, from a swim in the ocean to the skatin' rink. The first mornin' we went out fur a walk, we come across the bones of the biggest fish I ever hear tell of. 'Land of sakes an' goodness!' says I to Hiram; 'I wouldn't a believed it if I hadn't see it with my own eyes!' But Hiram wouldn't stop, an' pullin' me by, as fast as he could, he said: 'Come on, Pheba, an' don't act so green; we let that carriage driver in Pasadena make a pack of fools of us, an' they ain't goin' to work that game on me in Long Beach. Let 'em show their old wooden fish bones to someone who hain't onto their big yarns yet.' I heard afterwards 'twas a real whalefish, sixty foot long, they'd saved the bones of, but you couldn't a made your Uncle believe it, if all of Long Beach had stood up in a row an' made affidavits to the fact.

"Well, nothin' would do Hiram but I must get a bathin' suit jest because he did. Hiram, like many another, looked just awful in his'n. It was a whole week before I quit wonderin'

every time he donned it, how I ever could a-thought him good lookin' enough to marry; he looked all head, feet an' jints. At last, gettin' kind of used to seein' all sorts an' conditions of my fellar critters, as revealed to me through the medium of a bathin' suit, I picked up courage an' surprised Hiram, by appearin' in one myself. My! but it felt short an' funny, an' I believe I'd a-gone back an' took it off if Hiram hadn't made me mad, by yellin' as soon as he caught sight of me: 'Sho, Pheba, go back, go back quick and take it off; you look jest like the fat woman we see in the sideshow at the State Fair.' He comes splashin' up to me an' was tryin' to lead me back, when I give him a push, a mite harder mebby than I intended to, an' landed him back where a big wave caught him an' he swallered about a gallon of brine an' nearly choked to death. It made me mad to be coaxed into a thing an' then be made fun of, an' wear it I did, even when I heard a smarty aleck say, when he saw me: 'Now, look out, the ocean will be raised about a foot when she gets in.' I guess I didn't attract any more attention than your

Uncle tho; for he was a sight after he got stung by one of them fish that flops its tail up an' stings you when you tramps them; they call 'em stingaries. After he got stung, he bought him a pair of high-topped rubber boots, an' tied 'em tight with a big cord, around his legs just below his knees; I don't like to make fun of my own husband, but I must confess he did look funny, awful funny in that rig.

"I caught my first California flea at Long Beach. They wan't anyways near as bad as we used to hear they was tho. I remember readin' once in a book where it said: 'You can go to the California beaches an' take up a handful of sand an' the fleas will kick it all away by the time they get out.' Speakin' of fleas, makes me think of San Diego. We went out for a walk there one evenin', an' stopped with a lot of other folks who hadn't anything better to do, an' listened to a wild-eyed orator, who stood on a box on a street corner, makin' a speech. A tall, lank fellow stood by us tryin' to listen, too; but every few seconds he would hitch up one shoulder, roll his quid of tobacco

to the other side of his long jaw, an' dig hisself on the backbone; then he wouldn't no more'n get to listenin' again 'till he would hitch up his pants leg an' rake away at his shin like one possessed. He kept up them antics for some time, dividin' his attention between the scratchin' an' the speakin'. Finally the speaker, worked up to a frenzy by his own eloquence, I reckon, yelled: 'One of the burnin' questions of the hour is: "What shall we do with our ex-Presidents?" Can anyone answer?'

"There was a dead silence for a minute; then that scratchin' fellow, after a desperate attempt to reach an unreachable spot between his shoulder blades, yelled back: 'Send 'em to San Diego, an' keep 'em out of mischief fightin' fleas.' "

Uncle Hiram and Aunt Pheba Have the Time of Their Lives and Surpass All Other Experiences Having Their Pictures "Took" to Appear in the "History of Lancaster County," a Famous Work.

## AT STUDIO STECKELL

"I AM glad you liked the pictures, Mandy," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "that me an' your Uncle had taken in Los Angeles. Goodness knows, we had trouble enough havin' them took. We didn't start out in the first place to have them pictures made; it jest come by chance, as it were. We heard some other tourists, who was eatin' in the same restaurant where we was eatin', talkin' about havin' some fake pictures made to send back home, an' nothin' would do Hiram but we must go an' have some taken, too. 'Jest think,' says he, 'how astonished the folks back there will be to see me a-runnin' of that automobile at nearly a hundred miles an hour.'

"Well, we went, an' I do say fur naturalness, Hiram's picture was a success. When my time come, I had my choice of runnin' an automobile or standin' by an' lettin' on like's if I'd jest caught a big fish, or ridin' a rearin'

broncho, or pickin' oranges in a orange grove. I thought pickin' oranges would be the most becomin' for a woman of my years, so the man histed a ladder up against the orange tree an' I clim up an' set on the top of it. Then the picture man run back aways an' peeped at me through a little box with a curtain over it, an' told me how to pose. 'Your profile is good,' says he, 'so you may just turn to the right a little an' be a-reachin' for that top orange.'

"Well, I done jest as he told me to, but jest as I give myself a turn, an' reached for the orange, there was a squeak, an' a bang, an' in another second the air was full of arms, an' feet, an' orange boughs, an' ladders. Just then I heard the machine click an' the next thing I knowed Hiram was bendin' over me, askin' me where I was killed.

"Say, Mandy, I saw the picture afterwards, that picture man took of me durin' the catastrophe. Talk about your movin' pictures; they wan't in it along with mine. Flyin' pictures, or cyclone pictures, would a-been a better name. Four heads, eight arms, not to mention ladder an' orange boughs, goin' round like a wheel of

fortune tryin' to see how many times they could get took in a few seconds.

"The picture man was amazed when he see what he had done. Said 'twas the most remarkable photograph he ever see an' wanted to send it to the curiosity department of the Strand Magazine. But Hiram told him if he did, he'd use the law, or his fist on him, one or t'other, an' mebby both. The picture man was kind of scairt an' said he was jest suggestin', an' thought, praps, we'd be proud of it.

"Proud of it, nothin'!' stormed Hiram. 'Things are comin' to a purty pass, when a man's proud to see his wife, who weighs nearly two hundred pounds, a-caravoutin' around in the air with four heads, not to mention them sixteen han's an' feet; couldn't a-looked wus if she'd bin blowed to pieces with damanite.'

"Your Uncle's as stubborn as a mule, an' when we got out on the sidewalk, seein' I looked kind of played out from takin' sich vigorous exercise, he says: 'Pheba, we started out to have our pictures took an' no circus performance like that is goin' to scare me out. Let's go an' have some good old fashioned pic-

tures, 'thout any of them new fangled capers in 'em, taken.'

"So we asked a policeman where the best picture taker in town lived, an' he said a man on Broadway named Steckell Studio, or Studio Steckell, I forget which, made fine pictures. Hiram said he wanted the best because he had paid an editor in Lincoln who was gettin' up an Atlas, or History of Lancaster County, a hundred dollars fur a place fur our pictures an' a writeup of the farm. 'An,' says Hiram, 'while we have plenty of time, we will have them took, an' I won't have to lay off a day next summer when farm work's a-rushin' to have it done. 'Spect it will cost like sixty out here to get 'em; wouldn't wonder if 'twould cost three or four dollars a dozen. The last ones we had took in that photo car cost two a dozen, but I never liked 'em; made you look as big as a bar'l, an' I never sensed it how I really did look, from that mole on my ear stickin' out, an' claimin' all the attention. I'm goin' to turn sideways this time, an' have just a half face took, so as that mole will come on 'tother side of my face. Mebby if you was

to stand sideways, Pheba, 'twould make you look slimmer than you did in the last one.'

"We found the number, an' went up in an elevator into a nice big room with a lot of pictures hangin' on the wall. A couple (man an' his wife, I guess, fur he set down in a chair an' never offered it to her), was a-lookin' at the pictures. 'There's Maud Blosoman,' said the woman, lookin' at the picture of a long-featured woman in a white dress an' big black hat—picture hat, she called it, but I know they wear 'em other places besides to have their pictures taken in, because Herman's wife wore hers whenever she took a notion. 'How in the world Steckell can make a pretty lookin' picture out of her,' said the woman, lookin' at the picture hat lady, 'an still have it look enough like her to know her without bein' told, is beyond me. They say, though, if a woman has decent eyes an' hair an' a longish neck he can do the rest; if her nose is long he tilts her head back, an' if it's snubby, she drops her face a mite.'

" 'Yes,' answered the man, ill-natured like, 'that's the reason he has the swellhead, an'

charges such awful prices. Jest so long,' says he, 'as he can make a homely woman look pretty, jest so long will the vain creatures patronize him.' An' havin' relieved his feelin's, he stroked his Vandyke beard, with the hand that had the diamond ring on it, an' admired hisself in a long lookin' glass.

"Bye an' bye, a pretty girl, with the biggest pompadour an' the straightest front waist I ever see, come out from behind the counter an' told us our turn would come pretty soon. 'Twas nearly noon an' Hiram was gettin' hungry, so he says we might as well get ready an' not keep 'em waitin' on us, so he moved his chair alongside of mine, an' while I looked full faced forward, he looked half faced sideways to hide his mole. Then he put his arm around the back of my chair, an' tried to take one of my hands with his other free one; somehow I felt kind of silly with a lot of folks lookin' at us, an' I wouldn't let him.

" 'What ails you?' he said. 'Do you want folks at home to think we ain't on friendly terms? You know 'twill make talk, an' besides we've allays had our pictures taken some

sich way.' We set there a spell, folks a-lookin' in at us kind of queer, till I got so nervous that Hiram's hand, hangin' down in front of my shoulder, looked as big an' brown as one of them little California hams.

"After a while, a man come rushin' out of another room like as if he was tryin' to catch a train. When he sees us settin' there already posed, he stopped as quick as if he'd been shot, an' stood lookin' at us. Hiram was cross, an' he says: 'Mebby after you've looked at us a year or two you'll hustle 'round an' take our pictures!' The man, after chucklin' to hisself like, said: 'This is the reception room; come this way.'

"When we got into the room where the skylight an' things was, we posed ourselves again, but the picture man rushed up an' jerked Hiram's arm from around my shoulder. 'What you mean by that, Mr. Studio Steckell, or whatever yer name is?' says Hiram, red in the face. 'I let you know I contracted more than thirty years ago fur the right to put my arm 'round that woman's shoulder whenever I blamed pleased. Thought she was a bloomin'

stranger I picked up on the street to have my picture taken with, I reckon!'

"When the picture man went out fur a minute I said: 'Let's try that pose we have in them pictures we had taken before we was married; you settin' an' me standin' with my hand on your shoulder.' I always liked that style, but I'll admit it does make a man look smaller settin', an' a woman standin' look bigger. But it seems to be an unwritten law ever since picture takin' was invented to take 'em that way, an' if a woman don't look well it's one of the penalties she has to pay fur marryin' a small man. Mebby it's comin' in style now, though; I notice they are makin' all them Gibson wimmen bigger than the men.

"When the picture man come back an' see us fixed that way, he tore around, an' grabbed off Hiram's hat he was a-wearin' to hide his bald spot, an' pulled my hair loose around my face an' bossed us around till Hiram was in fur leavin'. He combed Hiram's hair over the bald spot an' made him set three-quarters instead of half face.

" 'What are you grinnin' about?' he asked

"Mebby if you was to stand side-ways, Pheba, 'twould make you look slimmer."

Hiram. 'Why,' says Hiram, 'so as I'll be ready when you tell me to look pleasant, of course.' 'If you call that lookin' pleasant I'd hate to see you tickled right bad,' said Mr. Steckell.

"Wall, he clawed Hiram's whiskers, an' fixed our hands natural like, an' throwed my lace scarf around my shoulders an' then he said: 'Well, I guess you will do now, but as you both look like you was settin' in a dentist's chair ready to have a tooth pulled, I'd advise you to think of something funny an' get that set look off your faces. Now think of the funniest thing you ever heard or saw,' an' he smiled at us real pleasant. Just then Hiram bust right out laf'in' till you could a-heard him a block. He said afterwards he got to thinkin' how funny I looked when I was havin' that movin' picture took.

"When we showed them pictures to the folks in the apartment house, their opinions was diversified. One oldish feller, who had horses on the brain, told Hiram if it made that much difference in his looks to be groomed, he'd advise him to buy a curry comb an' fix

hisself up every day. He said I looked as pleased with myself, with my head reined up, as if I'd jest come under the pole with flyin' colors.

"I never did understand race track talk; the only race horse I ever saw, bein' that Jay See Eye they had down to the State Fair once. So I took the pictures away an' give them to the rich old tourist woman, who had money on the brain, to look at. She asked how much they cost, an' said there was no fools like old fools—payin' sich a price.

"Hiram grumbled a good deal at eighteen dollars a dozen. But talk about men not carin' how they look in pictures—Hiram was nearly tickled to death when he see his'n. 'Not a mole, or squint, an' jest enough bald,' he said, 'to make me look intellectual.' An' I'll admit mine looked good to me, too, even if it did flatter me a bit. When Hiram was fixen 'em up to send back to that Lincoln editor he gazed at' em proudly fur a spell an' says: "I'll bet a cookie, Pheba, there won't be a handsomer couple in that Lancaster County Atlas. Especially amongst the men.' "

Uncle Hiram, Right from the Prairie State, Is Stumped by a Two-Acre "Farm"—Has a Mean Trick Played on Him, But Gets Even; Comes Out Strong as a Tennis Player.

## AT HERMAN'S

"I GUESS we won't get interrupted in our talk about California today, Mandy," observed Aunt Pheba Harrison as she settled herself comfortably for a chat. "Your Uncle Hiram has gone to Lincoln, to pay the taxes, an' that means he won't be home till night.

"After we got through seein' some of the sights in Pasadena, we went out to see the San Gabriel Mission. Hiram was so worked up an' glad, when we first struck the corn belt in Nebraska, an' see the green fields of corn a-wavin' (just as though anything that wan't nailed down wouldn't wave in this windy country) he broke out in poetry an' wrote a poem on Nebraska. He's proud of it; I will read it to you after a while.

"Well, as I started out to say, if anything would ever work my feelin's up to the poem-

writin' pitch, 'twould be them green hills an' orange groves between Pasadena an' the Mission. Hiram grumbled a good deal about takin' that trip, sayin' it was jest a fad folks was a-gettin' down in California, nosin' round amongst old mud buildin's, when they could see the very latest things in houses, all around, from a rose-covered bungalow to a millionaire's mansion. But I had my way for once, an' we went, an' I enjoyed every minute of it, too. Near the Mission, we saw a great big grape vine, fixed up on a trellis. It covered about an acre, anyway, that was what an Englishman, who wore a cap an' had a kodak strapped to his shoulder, told us. But Hiram told him to shut up his head—he had been in California too long to believe every fool yarn he heard. Then the Englishman quit lookin' at the grape vine an' looked at Hiram, examinin' him through a round glass, like as if he was as much of a curiosity as them dog-eatin' Igorrotes we saw at the Chutes. Guess he was jest weak in one eye; anyway, his specks only had one glass in them.

"When we got to the Mission, there was a

passel of tourists women, waitin' to go through. Hiram was the only man in the bunch, so he gave the guide, or whatever they call him, a quarter. The women offered him a nickel, but he said real short like that a dime was the smallest sum accepted. He was so disgusted with the crowd for bein' so stingy that he took us through the buildin' nearly on the run, an' we was out at the other end before we was hardly in. I wanted to look longer at them old an' valuable paintin's, but Hiram 'lowed he wouldn't hang 'em in a barn if he could afford new ones; he never did appreciate antique things; says he can't see why a woman will fuss with a man about wearin' his old clothes an' then want faded old pictures an' sich.

"Speakin' of old clothes, makes me think about our visit to his nephew, Herman Harrison. I was just finishin' packin' our trunk to go to California, when in comes your Uncle with his arm full of old clothes, an old outing flannel shirt with a turn-over collar, an old pair of duck pants, faded white, a linen duster an' an old straw hat as big as a washtub. I tried to coax him out of it, but you might as well

talk to a mule when he gets old clothes on the brain, an' he said: 'I'm takin' them things to wear out on Herman's farm; like as not he will be shuckin' corn, or thrashin' or drivin' hogs to market while we are there, an' it will save my new twenty-five dollar suit. Mebby I'll get to go huntin' too; I see by his letter he lives out in the woods, between Los Angeles an' Pasadena in the Oak Knoll country. Must be timbered or they wouldn't a-named it that.'

"Herman met us at the station, him an' his wife, an' a handsomer, kinder couple I never saw. They used to be real poor. Hiram gave him money to learn to be a lawyer, an' they are real well fixed now. When the automobile stopped in front of a beautiful place all flowers, orange trees, an' fountains, Hiram says: 'Yer machine give out?' an' Herman says: 'No, we are home.'

" 'Home!' gasped Hiram; 'ain't you goin' to the farm?'

" 'This is the farm I was writin' to you about, Uncle,' said Herman; 'we used to live in Los Angeles, but it got to be so crowded, we bought this little farm of two acres.'

" 'Two acres!' repeated Hiram, 'well if this ain't the blamedest country for big things, an' little things. Where's the woods?'

"Well, it would take all day to tell how Hiram growled about that farm; I was ashamed of him, but Herman only laughed. That night, after the lights were all out, we sat at our bedroom winder an' looked out on the moonlit world. 'It is beautiful,' says I, as I looked at the shadders playin' over the grassy lawn; at the trailin' branches of a pepper tree guardin' a sparklin' fountain; at two motionless palm trees guardin' the driveway.

" 'Yes, it's purty,' says Hiram; 'too purty. All it lacks is the tombstones, to turn it into a graveyard.'

"He was sore yet about not gettin' to shuck corn an' sich, in them old clothes, but I was glad. The next mornin' was Sunday an' accordin' to the custom of forty years, Hiram got up at six o'clock an' shaved hisself. There was runnin' water an' everything handy in our bedroom, but your Uncle is so set in his ways, he would go down to the kitchen an' hang his shavin' glass by an east winder, like he does at

home. So he rolled up his sleeves, an' rolled back his collar, an' let his galluses hang down his back, an' went down the back stairs in his stockin' feet to keep from wakin' the rest.

"He had jest got his face all lathered up an' his head throwed back an' was wavin' his razor around to dry it, when a white aproned Chinaman popped in. He gave Hiram one look, an' with a screech of terror he started on the dead run through the dinin' room, overturnin' the chairs, an' up the stairs three steps at a jump yellin': 'Clazy man! clazy man in kitchen; clut John's thloat with lazor!'

"Herman sprang out of bed to the rescue, an' when I got to the kitchen, he was leanin' up against the wall laughin' fit to kill hisself.

"It seemed the Chinaman cook didn't know there was visitors, bein' as how we got there late the night before. He never got over his scare, but would jump a foot if Hiram would speak to him suddenly, all the time we was there.

"After we finished our visit at Herman's, we went to a nice big hotel on the outskirts of Los Angeles. They had tennis grounds there

an' your Uncle learned to play tennis. You needn't laugh, for he learned to play with the best of them in no time, bein' quick an' nimble for a man of his years. The only thing that bothered him was the way the other players dressed in white flannels an' sich.

"I went out to watch them one mornin'; an' bless you! if there wan't your Uncle, prancin' around in them clothes he brought to wear on Herman's farm. He had bought him some bright red sox an' had borrowed my big felt slippers I wear in my room to rest my feet of an evenin'. Besides, he had on that big straw hat an' my white embroidered belt, that belonged to my shirt waist.

"A boy played a mean trick on him, too, at that hotel, an' guess he wished afterwards he hadn't. The boy was his mother's pet an' a meaner, more disagreeable child I never saw. When Hiram was real tired after playin' tennis, he would go to sleep in a big chair on the porch. Well, you know how your Uncle snores; so, when he got good an' sound asleep, that boy put one of them easy blowin' whistles in Hiram's mouth.

"It was funny, I'll admit that, to see him layin' there asleep, an' blowin' that whistle to beat the band. Folks laughed so hard it woke him up, an' he come near swallowin' the whistle an' chokin' to death. He knowed who done it, an' when he got through coughin' he lit into 'mamma's pet,' who was enjoyin' hisself furst rate, an' paddled him till he saw stars. Mamma threatened to sue an' says: 'Do you know, sir, the fine for this offense is twenty-five dollars?'

" 'All right, madam,' says Hiram, 'I'm open to all the engagements for sich exercise you want to contract fur at that price. I believe in folks spendin' money for what they enjoy best.'

"I wouldn't dare to tell him so, but all the same I laugh yet to myself when I happen to think how he looked, so sober an' sound asleep, settin' there a -whistlin' like a schoolboy.

"Well, it's gettin' late; I'll read you your Uncle's poem, an' then I must get supper; it's headed—

## "A RETURNED TOURIST."

"I've been tourin' 'round a spell, an' tho't I'd like to tell
'Bout the folks who think they own the sun an' moon.
When they bragged from morn till late of the beauties of their State,
I kept thinkin' of the Prairie State in June.

"They would tell of sunshine bright, an' of mountain tops so white,
An' of orange groves an' mockin' birds in tune.
All the while I seemed to hear the meadow lark so clear
Go singin' through the Prairie State in June.

"At a swell hotel one day, I just up an' had my say,
To the chap who et his orange with a spoon;
An' he owned I'd won the race when I asked him face to face,
If he'd ever seen the Prairie State in June.

"When my days on earth are past an' I go to
rest at last,
Be the summons late or be the summons
soon,
I will rest contented there in that land so
bright an' fair,
If it's something like the Prairie State in
June."

Aunt Pheba Has Her Opinion of Society Folks, and Is Slightly Confused by Distinctions Involved in Society Terms of "Week-End-Guest" Order — Preserves Her "Power of Speech" and Avoids Embarrassment.

## AT LONG BEACH

"I'M RIGHT glad you stayed all night, Mandy, for it's rainin' this mornin' till you can't see across the yard," said Aunt Pheba; "an' if I ever enjoy visitin' one time better'n another, it's on a day like this. Speakin' of visitin', makes me think of a woman named Mrs. Robson who was visitin' at Herman Harrison's, out Pasadena way, when we did. She had a spectacle eye glass stuck on a little stick, an' she'd look at me an' Hiram through that glass, like the professor the government sent out to examine the pests that was destroyin' the wheat fields in Nebraska used to examine the bugs under a magnifyin' glass. They called her a house guest, but what difference there is between a house guest an' an ordinary visitor I can't fur the life of me see.

"Then some more dressy folks came out

from one of the big hotels in Los Angeles to stay over Sunday. They called 'em 'week-end visitors,' but as the most of 'em stayed from one Friday to the next, which end of the week they was talkin' about I don't know.

"I must say the most of 'em used us real well. I wore my black silk dress for every day, an' Herman's wife put some lace an' things on me an' some lavender ribbon in my hair every night before we et supper. She said with my white hair, an' clear complexion, I looked sweet in lavender. Of course that sounds conceity, but I'm just tellin' what she said.

"Hiram wore his best things, an' let the barber trim his hair an' whiskers for the first time in his life. The 'week-end' folks called him 'quaint' an' a good 'character study,' which Hiram 'lowed was only a polite way they had of callin' him green.

"Well, I must say that society folks ain't so awful stuck up after all, when you get acquainted with 'em. One old crabbit bachelor went round scowlin' at every one, from sufferin' with corns, till he had to wear carpet

slippers. Some one tramped on his corns one night an' he yelled till you could a-heard him a block; then he seemed real ashamed an' went off in a corner by hisself. I went over an' coaxed him to rub them corns, three nights hand runnin', with dandelion roots. Well, he did, an' in a week he was sprintin' round in patent leather shoes, an' turned out to be a real good-lookin' man. An' the funniest part of it was, that the good-lookin' widow who laughed at them slippers, got to goin' with him, when he quit wearin' 'em, an' Herman's wife writes me they are goin' to make a match of it.

"Well, as I said, I got on furst rate with all of 'em but that house guest woman, a Mrs. Robson. She never offered to do a lick of work all the time she was there, not even to make her own bed, or wipe the dishes. Of course, there was lots of servants, but I don't think it's any more'n manners to offer. Pretended like as if she never see the inside of a kitchen, an' none of her folks, either; they was big folks to hear her tell it. Her huband was a doctor an' she was one of them silly society creatures, I've read about, but never see be-

fore; one of the kind that would carry a Teddy Bear or a squallin' pig around if she see somebody she thought was a little bigger than herself doin' of it.

"One evenin' at dinner she happened to mention the street an' number where she lived in Los Angeles. Hiram pricked up his ears an' says: 'That street and number sounds natural to me somehow.' 'Oh, yes,' he says, pullin' a card out of his pocket, 'that's the number an' street an' the name of the folks that Hester, our hired girl, give us an' told us to be sure an' go to see. So you are "Cousin Emma" out Westlake way that Hester's been talkin' so much about, an' tellin' what big times you used to have runnin' barefoot on that Ioway farm, be you? Hester says if you'd find her a good place to cook, she'd come out next year. We hate to lose her tho; she's the best cook we ever had. I'll write our address on this card an' you can tell her you saw us.'

"While Hiram was talkin', Mrs. Robson had turned most all the colors of the rainbow; an' the 'week-end' party, after castin' a few

amused glances round at each other, tried to turn the subject by all commencin' to talk at once 'bout the automobile hill climb which was comin' off at Altadena next day. Nothin' was said further, fur I tromped Hiram's foot, an' incidentally his corn, under the table, an' give him something else to think about; but I noticed Hester's 'Cousin Emma' wan't near so 'airy' the rest of the evenin' an' next mornin' she left. We see her once again at Long Beach in an automobile, but she never let on she ever see us before.

"Yes, we stayed down to Long Beach till Hiram got hurt in the swimmin' tank an' then we went back to Los Angeles a spell. He wasn't hurt much. A woman, who weighed nearly two hundred pounds, got into the tank for a swim 'long with us, but after a bit nothing would do but she must get up an' slide down that slippery slide into the water. The last time she slid down, me an' your Uncle happened to be right in her way, an' he bein' nearest got the full force of the blow, as she come shootin' down feet foremost, an' knocked the senses out of him in a jiffy.

"We got him out an' took him to the hotel an' he was as smart as ever next day, but I could never get him to put on another bathin' suit or go in swimmin' again. He said: 'If the wimmen folks are bound to run everything from a automobile to a barber shop in California, let 'em. Fur my part,' he said, 'I'm gettin' tired of bein' crowded out of everything an' playin' second fiddle in gineral to a passel of wimmen.'

"Then he got awful nervous about centipedes an' creepin' things, after he got stung with that stingarie. Of course, all the other bathers laughed at him, an' one day two young chaps, who boarded where we did, thought they'd have some fun with him. He always lay down on the warm sand after his bath, an' takin' off them rubber boots I was tellin' you about, go to sleep. When he got real sound asleep one day, they took the skeleton of a fish, just the bones you know, an' wrappin' some colored cords around it, an' puttin' horns on it, they made it look something fearful. They then got some stickfast glue an' stuck it onto your Uncle's leg just below the knee. I was

"A fat woman slid down one of them slides an' nearly knocked the senses out of your Uncle Hiram."

about asleep myself that day, an' the first I knew of it I heard him hollerin': 'Centipede! tarantular! scorpion!' an' kickin' out one of his legs tryin' to shake the thing off till you'd a-thought he was practicin' some kind of a new-fangled rag-time cake walk.

"One of the chaps that had a hand in it, seein' how scairt Hiram was, run up an' pulled the thing, together with some skin, off Hiram's leg an' throwed it into the ocean. Then Hiram hurried to the hotel, tellin' everyone he met he'd bin bit by some pizenous critter, an' spent all afternoon bathin' the red place on his leg with liniment, an' altho' he is a prohibitionist at home, he drank a pint of whisky to keep the pizen from spreadin'. He never could see the joke, an' tells folks back here how near he come bein' et up with a centipede out in California. After a while, your Uncle got so tired of store cookin', as he called it, that nothin' would do but we must go to housekeepin' a while. He seemed to pine for lye hominy an' homemade bread an' sich. Said he'd like to see how an old hen that hadn't ben in cold storage, with her hoofs an' head on, since the

Spanish war, would taste, with dumplin's, once more.

"After lookin' high an' low fur a housekeepin' place, we took our life in our hands, an' rid up a little mountain, in a contraption called the Angel's Flight. Hiram stood in the door ready to jump if anything give way, but we lived to reach the top an' was real pleased with the looks of the neighborhood out that way. We found a place at last in what they call an apartment house out there; all fixed up like a big hotel, only they rent you a parlor an' a kitchen 'long with the bedroom.

"Kind of a queer-lookin' woman showed us the rooms an' I guess she was a little off, because she kept callin' the rooms sweets. They was nice, clean furnished rooms, but I couldn't see anything very sweet about them. We took the rooms fur a month anyway, an' went to housekeepin' right away. Hiram went to see about the trunks an' I went to see about the groceries an' things. My! it seemed nice to be buyin' lettuce, an' spring chicken an' ripe cherries, that time in the year. The provisions an'

me got there just the same time an' I showed the boy where to take 'em.

"I peeped into the front room an' see Hiram had beat me home; he was layin' on the lounge with a paper over his face fast asleep. It just fags him all out to look fur rooms. Says he'd ruther take a hand at thrashin' any day than tramp around lookin' fur rooms; said he guessed women enjoyed it, as it give 'em a chance to snoop around an' see how other women had things fixed. 'Lookin' fur rooms,' says he, 'is mighty small business fur a able-bodied man.'

"We didn't expect to cook till next mornin', but seein' them groceries an' pots an' pans jest made my hands itch to get up a good meal. Seein' your Uncle so sound asleep, I concluded to surprise him by having supper ready when he woke up. He never used to say much about my cookin', till we got to boardin' out, but after a few months even the tony places like the Coronado at San Diego seemed to get tiresome.

"I remember him sayin' one day when we was eatin' there: 'I don't think Mrs. Coro-

nado can cook one mite better than you can, Pheba.' I heard the girl, who wore a fluffy blue dress, an' was eatin' near by, snicker into her handkerchief, an' I says: 'I don't suppose Mrs. Coronado any more than goes ahead with things;' but Hiram 'lowed if 'twas left to wasteful hired girls things would go to rack an' ruin in no time. 'A man would soon break up in a place like this,' says he, 'less his wife took holt in the kitchen.'

"But to get back to my own supper; I had fried chicken an' cream gravy, an' lettuce fixed farmer's style, with ham fryin's an' vinegar, mashed potato, an' cherry pie. Hiram says he'd as soon eat machine oil as olive oil on his victuals. When everything was ready, I went to call Hiram. He was still asleep an' I went up kind of gay like an' jerked the paper off his face.

"Mandy, you could a-knocked me down with a feather. There, instead of Hiram, laid a man with a big white moustache, an' a goatee as long as a billy goat's—'twas the stiffest moustache an' the pintedest goatee I ever saw; the rest of his face was red. We stared at each

other a spell, an' then he said kind of drawly like: 'Madam, may I inquire why you are honorin' my apartments with your presence?'

"I never lose the power of speech fur any great length of time, so I answered: 'I shouldn't wonder if you have blundered into the wrong apartments yourself, an' you had better get out of here before Hiram Harrison comes, or there might be trouble.'

"Just then I heard Hiram's voice out in the hall askin' if anyone had seen me; I opened the door an' an astonisheder man I never saw; but the old billy goat was right; I had made a mistake in the room; not only the room, but I had rid up in the elevator one floor too high an' our rooms were right under us. The joke was on me that time sure. Seems that Col. Norton wanted a sunny room an' to get it took the whole three. Bein' a bachelor he didn't have any use for the kitchen, of course.

"Well, I put Hiram to work helpin' me gather up our things, but he was hungry an' when he see that supper spread out there, he refused to budge till he et it, Colonel or no Colonel.

"While we was arguin', the Colonel come walkin' toward the kitchen, as straight as if he was marchin' to martial music. He stood in the kitchen door an' sniffin' the air said: 'By George, I smell Johnny cake, an' wilted lettuce, Southern style; Maryland biscuit, an' fried chicken an' gravy, as sure as I'm alive. Don't tell me I'm dreamin' of the Sunny South, but invite me to a chance at that dinnah.'

"By this time, we was all in a good humor an' I must say the Colonel, who, by the way, Hiram fit in the rebellion, was real good company, even if he did bow an' compliment me on my cookin' every few minutes. Found out afterwards he was a Southerner was the reason he talked so funny an' didn't use any r's in his words. 'Twan't the last meal he et with us an' I thought, as I see the two men enjoyin' themselves, that good cookin' took with the men folks all over the world."

Uncle Hiram Writes for the Lincoln Paper and Touches up Former Neighbors, City Government, Water Supply, Etc.—Ornaments for Office.

## LETTERS HOME

"BEFORE we started to California, Mandy," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "Hiram promised the editor of the 'Farmer's Guide' at Lincoln to write a letter back to the paper tellin' about things out there. The editor said fur Hiram to head the letter, 'California frum a Nebraska Farmer's Standpoint,' an' jest give him the main facts an' figgers about sich subjects as Former Neighbors, City Government, Water Supply, Agriculture an' Stock-Raisin' and sich topics. 'Then,' says he to Hiram, 'I will fix it up in shape to be published,' meanin' I suppose, he would fix up the grammer, an' spell the words right Hiram had missed.

"So one day, when we couldn't go sightseein' fur the rain, Hiram got out his writin' materials an' said: 'Now, Pheba, while you haint got the gift of writin', nor the flowin'

style of language that looks good in print, compared to me, I must admit that you will come in handy pintin' out an' helpin' me, on facts an' figgers, regardin' this country.' He commenced the letter by writin' with a bold flourishin' hand at the top of the page, 'California from a Farmer's Standpint, by Hiram Harrison.'

"'That name will look well in print,' says he, surveyin' it with satisfaction. 'Good name, too, Pheba; did you ever sense that? Presidents an' mayors an' road supervisors have bore that name, 'thout disgracin' it. Honest, Pheba, did you ever know any doers of notorious deeds named Harrison?' he asked.

"I've known lots of Harrisons that would never set the river afire, but as the letter was a-weightin' heavily on my mind, I answered absently: 'No;' an' he said: 'Now fur that first topic. What former neighbor will I tackle first?' 'Why,' says I, 'anyone you happen to think of.' 'How would Dave Higginson do?' says he.

"Now, Dave Higginson comes about the nearest bein' nuthin' in the shape of a man I

ever knowed, but not wantin' to put a damper on his flow of idees I said: 'Jest dot down any interestin' fact you know about Dave;' an' he wrote: 'Former neighbors of Dave Higginson may be glad to hear he is stuck here fur good;' then stopped. He bit the end of his penholder an' wriggled around in his chair an' run his fingers through his hair, but he couldn't squeeze out another fact about our 'former neighbor.' 'Pheba,' says he, 'hain't you got any facts to fit the subject at hand? I thought wimmen always found out things about their neighbors, bein's they talk so much.'

"'My tho'ts don't seem to be flowin' any freer than yourn,' says I; but after thinkin' a bit, I asked: 'What was you an' Dave talkin' about t'other day?'

"'Good,' says Hiram, brightenin' up, an' he wrote: 'Dave Higginson seems to be gettin' along furstrate fur him; said he borrered five hundred dollars out of the bank last week which was somethin' he never could a-done at home.'

"'Ain't there any other former neighbors?' says I. 'Dave Higginson's affairs don't seem

to make extra good readin', specially when it's comin' out in cold type. Mebby they'd like to hear about that Nebraska picnic we went to t'other day?' an' grabbin' his pen like an inspired poet, he wrote: 'Attended a Nebraska picnic at Eastlake Park an' saw a lot of folks who never hear tell of me before. They had little books tied to trees, each tree playin' like it was a county. A feller would rush up to his county tree, an' read the names an' write his own; then turn round an' shake hands with whoever happened to be standin' there an' mebby say: "What part of Nebraska are you frum?" An' mebby the other man would answer: "I'm frum Broken Bow, in Custer County," an' the other man would think a bit an' say: "Ever know a man named Smith out there?" An' the Broken Bow in Custer County man would answer: "Let's see, smallish man, with chin whiskers." "Yes, sir; same Smith," says the other man, beamin' at the remarkable coincerdence, an' they both feel real at home with each other over the mutual acquaintance. Then the two men laff an' talk quite a spell over Smith's peculiarities, till finally the

Broken Bow man says: "Too bad Smith had to lose his third wife," an' the other man, lookin' real astonished, says: "Smith married? Well, it's been three or four years since I see him. Any children?" "Twelve," answered the Broken Bow man an' they both gaze at each other in wonder. Well, anyhow they find out at last that they have both been talkin' all this time bout a different Smith, so they kind of sheepishly turn the subject to tornadoes, bumper crops, an' lunch baskets.'

" 'There,' says he, layin' down his pen an' moppin' his forehead with a handkerchief; 'I call that a pretty good starter. Now fur the next topic, Agriculture;' an' he wrote: 'Everything in the way of farmin' is done in this country either on the biggest or littlest scale you ever see. Some farms no bigger than city lots, an' then agin some of their ranches are measured by square miles instid of acres. Everything they raise is either big er little; oranges half as big as your head, er the size of a thimble. I saw a grape vine that kivered an acre an' the bunches of grapes are some-

thing fierce. Saw one two foot long an' one foot across.'

" 'How's that?' says Hiram, lookin' pleased with hisself. 'Purty good,' says I, 'only I think you overdrawed that bunch of grapes a little, cause when I looked clost I could see where they had tied a dozen bunches together with twine string jest to fool folks, for a joke.' 'Shucks,' says Hiram, scowlin' at the writin', 'if you are goin' to pick over an' investigate every fact I set down, you are goin' to take all the snap outen this letter, an' the editor will twist it up and throw it in the waste bag.' 'Waste basket, you mean,' says I; an' pretendin' not to hear me, he says: 'Where was I when you interfered with my grape story? Oh, yes, I was a-goin to write what that fellar told us about his willer cane takin' root, but I reckon it's no use to write anything, accordin' to you, I can't make affidavit to.'

" 'Garden patches are so scarce in Los Angeles they are havin' roof gardens made on the top of some of the highest buildin's,' he wrote. 'Hope you ain't goin' to contradict that when I have Herman's word fur it?' 'We went out

to the Baldwin ranch, an' see some fine stock,' he wrote. 'Stock all look well in these parts, except hogs,—in fact I hain't see a handsome three hundred pound, corn-fed porker since I left home. I've been inquirin' about the city-government in Los Angeles, an' they tell me 'twould take an expert to figger out the inside workin's of that body politic. They say they start out with two tickets an' parties, then each party divides itself up, an' when they commence fightin' each other, the fun is on. I guess things are run 'bout like they are in other big places; they say, though, they voted one man into office once, an' on second tho't, voted him out agin. If sich a custom was to become gineral, wouldn't it scare some of them Lincoln fellers stiff?'

"'Over in Pasadena things are different; there are so many men there who would be ornaments to any office you couldn't throw a stone 'thout hittin' one. A Pasadena man told me he thought 'twould be a good idee to let the voters draw cuts, or numbers, fur the office, an' save the expense of an election. Sich talk speaks well fur any town.'

"'Now fur the water works topic,' says Hiram, an' he wrote: 'They use the Los Angeles river water to drink here, an' frum the looks of said river I should say she was about drunk dry.'

"'What about that Owens River business we see so much about in the papers?' says I. On comparin' notes we both found out we were awful ignorant on the Owens River question, so Hiram laid aside his pen an' went out into the office to inquire into the subject a little. The first man he asked was in a hurry to ketch a street car, but he said they are bringin' that river down frum the mountains, miles an' miles, to supply the city with water, because before long there was goin' to be a million people drinkin' Los Angeles water. The man flew out after his car, an' Hiram, astonished at the big figgers, said to a jolly-lookin' fellar, who was a listener to the conversation: 'What did he mean about a million folks drinkin' Los Angeles water; are they goin' to bottle it to ship away?'

"'Oh, no,' answered the man, 'he means there will be that many people livin' here when

they carry out the great water project that's afoot.' 'What project?' asked Hiram. 'Why,' said the jolly man, 'I guess you ain't heard about them bringin' that Owens River down here an' turnin' it into the Los Angeles river, —sure; they will dam up the Los Angeles river a few miles below here an' then put gondolas an' sail boats on it to rent out to the tourists. 'Twill be the greatest pleasure resort in the world. Then they are goin' to terrace the hillsides on each side of the river an' fix it up with flowers an' grass an' trees, an' sell it to the millionaires fur winter homes.'

"What further they was agoin' to do, Hiram didn't hear, fur jest then a homely-sour-faced woman, his wife I guess, come along an' ordered him to his room. By this time the sun was a-shinin' an' we concluded to go sightseein', and let the Farmers' Guide letter go over till another rainy day."

Uncle Hiram Continues Correspondence to Farmers' Guide and Records History, Ancient and Modern; Pasadena Claims Most of His Attention, as a Matter of Course—What Women Read.

## MORE LETTERS

"SUCH a time as we had, Mandy," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "a-finishin' up that letter to the Farmers' Guide. Seemed like what I told your Uncle Hiram to write sounded queer an' what he wrote hisself sounded queerer. 'What other topics was I to write on?' said your Uncle, after he got all settled ready for writin'; an' I said: 'I can't remember exactly, but it seems to me the editor said something about history, libraries, transportation an' climate.'

" 'History 'tis then,' said Hiram, hitchin' up his chair closter to the table, an' readin' it to me as he wrote: 'Los Angeles was laid out by some Spanish real estate agents in 1781. She was six miles square, the Plaza in the center, an' the Mission church on the west side, where it still stands, if some of them enterprisen' real estate men hain't tore it down, an'

run up one of them sky scrapers, in place of it, in the last two weeks. This town grows so fast that what you write about her one month, hain't true the next.

" 'In the Plaza the Spanish used to have some high old times, if the stories one hears about 'em are true; fiestas, an' chicken fights, an' eatin' tamales seemed to be the fads of the day.'

" 'There,' says Hiram, squintin' one eye admirin'ly at what he had jest written, 'I call that pretty fair fur free-hand, extemporaneous writin'. Shouldn't wonder if I had missed it by not takin' up historical novel writin' instid of poetry; she goes as easy as fallin' off a log.

" 'Now fur Pasadena,' an' he wrote: 'Pasadena jines Los Angeles on the north, an' the country you go skimmin' through on the electric car to reach it, with its green hills an' neat lookin' sign boards, is to my mind the prettiest ride anywhere around. The country around it, an' the town itself, is as purty as fairyland, an' its history reads like a fairy-tale. Thirty months ago Pasadena was a dreary lookin' sheep ranch where—'

"'Stop!' says I to Hiram. 'Ain't you makin' a mistake in your dates there of about thirty years?' 'Where?' says he, lookin' real cross at bein' interrupted. 'When a person is writin' great historical facts, a little thing like a wrong date don't count. I see, tho, you're bound to pin me down to facts, an' make this letter read as flat as a last year's almanac, er one of them Congreshonel Records, besides spilin' the looks of it scratchin' out so much.'

"'Now,' said he, after he had corrected it, 'what else will I say about Pasadena's ancient history? You've got me off the track entirely.' 'Nothin' more,' says I, 'its present history is good enough fur me. Tell about the time we visited the Library,' an' he wrote: 'Made a visit to the Library in Pasadena, an' felt at home, especially when I see a copy of The Commoner a-layin' on the readin' table. The buildin' is nice an' light an' the daily papers hain't a week old. There's a printed notice tellin' the reader not to keep the paper more than twenty minutes; but, my! you find selfish folks the world over; the man who smokes into a sick woman's face, an' the woman who puts

her bundles in the street car seat, to keep a tired workin' man from settin' down, are first cousins to the individual who hangs onto the mornin' paper an hour or two, in the public libraries. Then everybody connected with the place was nice, an' pleasant, an' answered questions like 'twas a pleasure. They told me the best read book in the library was the Doctor Book an' the—'

" 'I hate to interrupt you agin, Hiram,' says I, 'but while not actually prevericatin', you are givin' a wrong impression 'bout that book. I looked inside of it an' there wan't a thing in it about docterin', jest an ordinary novel.' At this Hiram laid his head down on the table an' I felt real sorry fur him as he said: 'This manuscript's a-goin' to be rubbed out an' criss-crossed till it will look wuss than one of them Horace Greeley letters I see at the Exposition in Omaha.' To comfort him I said: 'You jest go an' have it typewrit, an' if there's any mistakes, the editor will think 'twas the typewriter's fault. That's the way all the big writers do.'

"At this he brightened up considerable, an'

says: 'Do you think 'twould ever get out about me in Lancaster County, an' be brought up agin me when I run fur County Commissioner next fall? Them farmers will stand most anything but puttin' on style amongst each other. Gettin' his clothes made at the tailors, an' his beard trimmed p'inted, beat Dan Hanford fur County Clerk, an' that new automobile beat Doc Steinwell fur Coroner, good an' plenty. But I guess I'll risk it,' an' lookin' mighty relieved he wrote on: 'Folks are either gettin' tired of dogs, or Jack London, I don't know which; they say his book called "White Fangs" is scarcely read. Amongst the wimmen the most popular book seems to be, "The Port of Missin' Men." The title is ruther misleadin' an' I guess some of the wimmen who had their men come up missin' tho't mebby they'd hear some news from them, from the way the title read. Mark Twain's mental science is Pasadena's favorite. I heard a woman ask fur a book called, "The Raise an' Fall of the Mustach." Don't know what in creation it could be about, but it raised my curiosity an' I'm goin' to read that book if I have to buy it.'

"'As fur the climate out here, it's all right an' they are so touchy about it you wouldn't das't say so if it wasn't. They tell me some men once took a bath in the ocean an' picked oranges in Pasadena, an' snow-balled each other on Mt. Lowe, all in one day; so I guess so fur as climate is concerned in Southern Californy you jest pay your money an' take your choice. I hear that some of the folks back there didn't take much stock in the earthquake stories the tourists told when they got back home. Well, we were in Frisco two weeks after it happened an' frum the looks of things I should say she quaked all right. In the little town where we was stayin' they had several little rumbles that shook things up a bit. I wa'n't so awfully scared— What you snickerin' about, Pheba?' said your Uncle suddenly, quittin' writin' an' lookin' around. 'Oh, nothin',' says I, an' he went on writin' where he left off—'but I wanted to know what the man in the next room to ours thought about it, so I rushed in, an' he set up in bed most astonished to hear 'twas an earthquake. 'What in creation did you think 'twas?' said

I, an' grinnin' all over he answered: 'I'm frum Missoury, an' I thought the fever an' ager chills had me agin sure, an' I'm tickled most to death to find out it's jest an earthquake,' an' chucklin' to hisself he took a drink of somethin' out of a bottle an' throwed a handful of quinine powders into the fireplace an' rollin' over in bed went to sleep.

" 'The meanest man I see since I left home went through the earthquake 'thout a scratch. He was one of them know-it-all, bossy kind of men, an' when the earthquake commenced to shake things around pretty lively he run into what he considered the safest corner of the room an' ordered his wife to foller him; but she with the usual prevarsity of the female kind, refused to obey an' stayed in the opposite corner. After the tremble past she was wedged into that corner by furniture an' things as tight as if she was in the county jail. Her husband let her stay in there a half day before some of the neighbors heard her hollerin' an' let her out. He said if she was so stuck on that particular corner, she could stay an' enjoy it fur all him. I call sich actions real mean.'

" 'Now let's settle that transportation business,' says Hiram, an' he wrote: 'There are several styles of transportation out here, amongst them automobiles, street cars, tallyhoes an' leg power. The last named used to be considered the safest, but since the automobiles have come into general use I have my doubts. One man frum the East who hadn't walked spry fur years, on account of rheumatiz, got run down so often by the aforesaid vehicles that he got entirely well an' developed into a first class sprinter, on account of the exercise he got jumpin', side steppin', an' turnin' hand springs, to get out of their way. Limbered him up in no time. The automobiles are bad enough, but them tallyhoes are the limit. I got wedged into one of the high seats between two fat wimmen, one of them bein' my wife who'—'I wouldn't drag my personal affairs into a printed letter,' says I, so he rubbed out 'one of them bein' my wife,' an' wrote on: 'That driver acted like he wanted to scare us out of our senses, by the way he turned corners an' run the horses down steep hills. He acted frum the furst like he was

bound to upset us an' at last he did. Nobody was hurt, fur he spilled us out on a pile of sand, but 'twas a close shave. The man who wrote that "large bodies move slowly," would a' modified his statement considerable if he'd a' seen them fat wimmen doin' that unloadin' act. My wife'—'I think the letter is long enough,' says I, so he rubbed out 'my wife,' an' signed his name, 'Hiram Harrison, Esq.' "

Uncle Hiram Has His Fortune Told at Venice and Learns How Near He Came to Being Literary—Also Gets Seasick on the Ship Hotel.

## AT VENICE

"WE WENT down to Venice," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "an' et our dinner on a ship hotel. We had a nice time down there. A person could spend a week there an' not see all the sights then. We was right hungry by dinner time an' your Uncle Hiram et real hearty. While he set there finishin' up his strawberry shortcake an' pie an' gazin' at the waves, he turned as pale as putty, all at once, an' says: 'Pheba, this ship is rockin' awful. Shouldn't wonder if there's a tidal wave comin' or one of them deep-sea earthquakes we've hear tell of. I hate to pay fur this pie an' puddin' an' not eat it, but I can't stand this much longer or I'll die. They orter be arrested for enticin' folks on here pretendin' it's safe an' then go to rockin' us to make us too sick to eat what we paid for. Hain't got any of them tablets along the doc-

to1 that was on that Catalina boat give us fur seasickness, have you?' says he, lookin' real distressed.

" 'Yes, I have, but they are out in my little handsatchel we checked with our things in the office.'

" 'Well,' says he, 'give me the check an' I'll go an' take some of them.'

" 'Shall I go with you?' said I, an' he answered: 'No, I'll go alone; no use of you leavin' part of your victuals we paid for because I have to. Mebby you can manage them desserts I'm leavin', too.'

"Your Uncle was seasick, sure, this time; he reeled so I wanted to go with him, but he was so 'fraid we wouldn't get the worth of our money that he'd ruther a' crawled on his hands an' knees than have me leave it. Hiram ain't a stingy man, as stingy men go, but he's awful afraid somebody's goin' to cheat him out of a nickel.

"When I went out of the dinin' room some fifteen minutes later, I found him feelin' fustrate. He said he never had medicine to act so quick. 'I took three of them tablets,' says

he, 'when I furst come out, an' I've jest taken three more, which I reckon will be all I need.' He handed me the satchel back an' told me to put the tablets away an' not have 'em layin' around so careless, for exceptin' Peruna they was the quickest actin' medicine he ever took.

"Talk about mental science an' the power of mind over matter! I looked into my satchel an' there was them doctor's tablets in a side pocket undisturbed. Hiram Harrison had taken six of them violet tablets I was a-carryin' 'round to scent my handkerchief with. When I see what he had done, I was scairt an' lost no time goin' to the drug store an' askin' about them. The druggist said they was harmless, as fur as he knowed. I didn't tell Hiram, fur I knowed 'twould scare him stiff if he knowed it, no matter what the druggist said, an' as he felt better than he had for years I let matters rest. So much for imagination.

"When Hiram found out that the ship hotel was a-standin' still an' he had done most of the rockin' hisself, he was disappointed, but I got his mind off of it by tellin' him we must be movin' if we see any of the sights. We saw

a funny fixin' down there fur weighin' folks in. A man that runs it takes holt of your arm an' guesses on your weight an' the nearer he comes to it the more money he makes. He took holt of my arm an' was about to make a guess when Hiram had to chime in an' say: 'Before this transaction proceeds any furder I want to warn you I won't be responsible fur any of the gearin' of that chair givin' way when you are a-weighin' of that woman' (that woman meaning me).

"If there's one subject I don't like to hear discussed too freely it's my weight, so I refused to be weighed at all. Then he took a holt of Hiram's arm an' after lookin' up an' down his anatomy, he said: 'A hundred an' thirty'; but Hiram didn't hear the hundred an' thought the man was makin' fun of him before all them folks by guessin' him at thirty. 'Thirty nothin',' said Hiram, mad as he could be, 'I'll make you look like thirty cents if you get too funny.'

"The weighin' man was real nice about it, an' after Hiram found out his mistake he got on the chair an' was nearly tickled to death

to think he tipped the beam at one hundred an' thirty-two. Then we went into a tent where a Gipsy lookin' woman was a-tellin' fortunes. I concluded I'd ruther have my dollar for something else, so Hiram had her read his palm. Her big black eyes seemed to see clear thru you an' as she half closed them an' took Hiram's hand, she said:

" 'I see cornfields an' cattle on a thousand hills.' Then she took a magnifyin' glass an' lookin' at the lines in his hand closer, said: 'The headline is strong to stubbornness; memory good, never known to forget a meal hour in your life. Luck line is so well developed it almost makes up for the lack of good judgment an' foresight. This luck line is found in the hands of men who have made fortunes in real estate, or on the Board of Trade. This line,' says she, pointin' to another one, 'indicates literary talent, an' if you was not entirely lackin' in education an' ideas you might have been a writer. The ancestral lines are strong an' if they did not terminate so curiously I would say your relatives were people

noted for somethin' unusual; perhaps I might tell by readin' the other hand.

"'Accordin' to your conscience line,' she went on, 'I would say you have been carryin' a guilty secret for about two years. By readin' the other hand (which is 50 cents extra) I may be able to tell you what it is an' give you important advice concernin' it.'

"At this Hiram looked real scairt an' shuttin' his left fist up tight we left the tent. 'Wonderful, wonderful!' says he. 'What's so wonderful?' says I, thinkin' a dollar was a pretty good price to hear what a person already knowed. 'Why,' says he, 'that readin' of my pam. Who in creation but a cleravoynt would a' knowed I was frum the country? Why, she see them cornfields an' cattle like lookin' through a winder.' I had my own opinion about how she guessed he was from the country, but I said nothin' an' he continued: 'Then that luck line was all right, too; didn't I get back twelve dollars fur them ten I put up on a wheat margin once? Guess I'll try it agin, as it seems as how the line of fate seems to be pintin' that way. Then she said I could write

—reckon you are at last gettin' on to a fact you have always doubted, Pheba.'

"'She said you could if you had education an' ideas,' said I. 'Idees nothin',' says Hiram, 'it is old-fashioned to put idees into your writin' nowadays, an' as fur edecation, I guess I can do as well as that Indiana poet an' some of them other fellows they are makin' a fuss over, any day in the week. An' didn't she hit the nail on the head about them noted relations of mine,' says he, real tickled. 'I'm proud when it comes to them.' 'Well,' says I, 'I've seen most of them an' the only thing I could think of them bein' noted for is commonness of the commonest sort.' 'Common nothin',' says he, 'mebby you never heard about that uncle of mine who was a Chicago lawyer an' got into a scrape connected with a get-rich-quick scheme an' lit out fur Californy in the early sixties. Couldn't one man in a thousand get out of the county between two days like he did. Smart, as smart as cayenne pepper. The first thing he did after he got to one of the new Western States was to get a law passed makin' the get-rich-quick scheme legal.

Then he sent some of the money back to another lawyer an' he got the law fixed up at the other end of the line; then when he got elected to some big office out West an' come back home on a visit, they met him with a brass band, instid of the sheriff. Then another uncle was noted for bein' the biggest eater in Indiana. Used to go to all the county fairs for miles around an' engage in pancake er egg eatin' matches. Beat his rivals so often he couldn't pull off a match any more where he was known. When he was a young man an' went to country dances they used to order ten pounds more of crackers an' a extra dozen canned coves if they knowed he was a-comin'.

"'Some folks might call sich a man noted an' some might call him notorious,' suggested I, an' he said: 'Notorious nothin,' considerin' the article they have nowadays, 'twas a stomach to be proud of. He got a long piece printed in the paper about him when he died peacefully, after eatin' a biled dinner at the age of ninety-seven years, an' then some. Then I had a cousin who was a noted belle in Posey County. As many as six horses could be seen of a Sat-

urday night hitched to the rail fence in front of her father's house, not to mention the beaux that came a-foot — wore the first Garabaldy Shaker bonnet that was ever seen in old Posey. Then, there was my grandmother, Polly Harrison, who could make more personally conducted visits to the neighbors, when there was any new gossip that needed airin', of any woman of her age in Indiana. She used to hear about things that was a-happenin' long before they had happened, she had sich a nose for news. She'd a' commanded a big salary on one of the yaller journals they have at the present day.'

"'But, Hiram,' says I, shuttin' him off on them relations, 'what is it that has been on your conscience two years?' His countenance fell, an' lookin' real sheepish, he answered: 'If you must know, I voted for the wrong man at the last Presidential election.'

"An' to this day I ain't never found out how he voted."

Uncle Hiram's Wonderful Invention, Which Will Revolutionize the Poultry Business and Put Him in the Millionaire Class, With a Mansion on "Orange Grove Street" in Pasadena — Aunt Pheba Unsympathetic, Just Like a Woman.

## AT THE OSTRICH FARM

"IF YOU ever go to California, Mandy," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "be sure an' take one of them tallyho rides out from Pasadena. They tell me the scenery is fine any time of the year, but along in April an' May, I reckon there's nothin' to compare with it this side of Pardise.

"One tourist man was so wrought up over it that he quoted poetry from start to finish. One pome he quoted (Hiram tho't 'twas original, but I guess it wan't), went on tellin' about the olives, an' citron, bein' the finest of fruit, an' somethin' about the nightingales never bein' mute. Then, when he see a bungalow with only a speck of roof, an' the windows, an' doors, showin' through the climin' roses, an' a pretty girl in a white dress pickin' them, he broke out agin an' said:

" 'An the maidens are sweet as the roses they twine,

An' all save the spirit of man is divine.'

"Seems funny, because Hiram was never particular before, but ever since he wrote a pome hisself, he's been awful fault findin' 'bout other people's poetry; so he jumped onto that tourist man's poetry an' figertively speakin' tore it all to pieces, sayin': 'Seems to me your poetry would be a little truer to this country if you was to say orange an' lemon, 'stead of olives an' citron; hain't see no citron round here, except in a bakery cake.' I heard afterwards, tho, they had the biggest citron ranch in the world over near Monrovia, but Hiram didn't know it then.

" 'An', says Hiram, 'that nightingale bird orter be changed to suit this country, to mockin' bird; an' even then 'twouldn't be strictly true, fur them mockin' birds don't sing in their sleep, or when their bills are full of victuals. Then I don't like that jangle you got off 'bout them sweet maidens, an' sayin' the spirits of men hain't divine.' Queer thing,' says he, 'that ever since poetry's bin writ they have bin a-diggin' at the men an' puttin' everything that

looks a little shady onto them, lettin' the wimmen go scot free.'

" 'The next poetry I write,' says he, 'I'm goin' to throw all my bouquets at the men, an' let the wimmen hear some plain facts about theirselves once in a while.' I set still and didn't take sides with either of them, havin' found out long ago that p'inten' out faults in other folks's poetry, er writin', er music, er pictures, was like p'inten' out faults in other folks's children, a thankless task.

"After the tourist man had recovered from his astonishment, at what he called Hiram's 'remarkable criticism,' he let up on poetry an' took to prose, sayin' as he gazed in admiration at the grand panorama of mountain, hills an' valley spread out before him: 'An' to think I have been crossin' the ocean in search of the beautiful in nature when right in my own native land there exists such a scene as this. Think what I have been missin' right at my own door.'

" 'Sure,' says Hiram, 'I'd advise you to patronise home industry every time. I always ship my hogs to Omaha instead of Chicago if

the price is as good.' The tourist man looked at Hiram curiously out of the corner of his eye, but the smell an' sight of an orange grove we was passin' was a leetle too much fur him, an' forgittin' hisself he waved his hand toward the trees an' said: 'Great golden globes, half hid mid shimmerin' green, an' surely this valley must rival the Gardens of Gul in her bloom.'

"The rest of us was wrought up in our feelin's, too, durin' that lovely tallyho ride, only we didn't express ourselves so violently. As we was comin' back into Pasadena we met a lot of folks out on Colorado Street, mostly wimmen, horseback ridin'. They was dressed considerable like men wearin' cowboy hats an' ridin' their horses man fashion. Hiram grabbed my arm jest as soon as they come in sight an' says: 'Look! Pheba, look! here comes the first California Injuns we've seen yet. Gee, but they are a hard-lookin' crowd. Them missionaries that built missions an' labored so hard to civilize 'em must feel pretty bad to see 'em carryin' on like this. Squaws

a-ridin' man fashion jest like they did in Nebraska forty year ago.'

"Everyone in the tallyho was a-laughin' by this time an' as we got nearer to them, Hiram see his mistake an' was more astonished than ever; the man who had been doin' the pome quotin' said: 'Them ain't Indians; they are a party of rich tourists that are stayin' at one of the big hotels in Pasadena.'

" 'Now, I call them clothes an' this new style of ridin' real sensible,' says I, lookin' at 'em admirin'ly; 'I don't know when wimmen have taken up with a sensibler fad.'

" 'Sensible nothin',' says Hiram, as he gazed in indignation an' wonder at the riders, 'they look like a lot of escaped lunatics or part of Buffalo Bill's wild west show.' 'Sensible nothin',' he repeated. 'It's scandalous, such actions. Pheba, if I ever hear of you takin' up this new circus ridin' fad, I'll sue fur a divorce afore I'm a day older. Look cute, wouldn't you, a-wearin' one of them short, two skirt affairs, an' a cowboy hat, perched up on one of them skittish critters. Just let me ketch you a-tryin' it an' I'll ride alongside of you on

a side-saddle, a-wearin' a ridin' skirt an' a sunbonnit. Dressin' like the opposite sex hain't a game only one kin play at. Then, besides, if you rode that way some of them kodak fiends might get a snap shot at you an' send it to the curiosity part of some magazine an' disgrace me all over Lancaster county. Mebby you'd like it, tho, bein's how all them society folks are havin' their pictures in the papers; if you want your picture in a paper you can invite a friend or two to drink a cup of tea with you, an' then write it up an' send your picture along with it to the Sunday paper. Better send the one where I'm with you, bein's it's so good. I see men have theirs in, too.'

"'Why, Hiram,' says I, goin' back to the horseback riders, 'I thought you would be real pleased to see the wimmen ridin' so; you know you always grumbled so when me, or any other women, rode any of the critters at home, fur fear we'd make 'em lopsided. Now this new style of ridin' would do away with that.'

"'Lopsided nothin',' said your Uncle, 'you know I'd rather see every critter on the place

lopsided to an angle of forty-five degrees, afore I'd see you makin' sich a show of yourself.'

" 'Well, I'll see,' says I. It ain't good policy to let go your whip hand too soon. It's jest as well to keep a man guessin' what you are a-goin' to do, an' besides I see in a minute the little episode was a-goin' to make one of them new rubber-tired buggies I'd been a-lookin' at in Lincoln come easier, so I jest said I'd see, givin' him to understand it want a 'closed incident' by no means.

"When we got back frum that tallyho ride, we stopped at one of the big hotels in Pasadena for our dinners. It's a trick lots of Eastern tourists have out there, of eatin' a meal at each of the big tourist hotels in California. Then when they get home, they can refer to it, an' tell what happened at sich an' sich a hotel fur the rest of their lives. It's wonderful how many things can happen in a short time. One tourist woman talked for days about what happened at one of them big hotels, an' her husband told us afterwards they never et but one meal there. Well, we stayed fur lunch an' dinner too, because Hiram says the lunches at

them big places wa'n't fillin', so we went back an' had dinner, too, which was fine.

"We put in the afternoon, goin' out South Pasadena way to the ostrich farm. I could talk all day about them ostriches, they was sich funny critters, but all the same I wish we never had heard tell of a California ostrich. Your Uncle got some of the queerest notions in his head frum goin' there. He stood fur hours a-lookin' at a fool ostrich that was a-settin' on the bare ground a-tryin' to hatch out some eggs. He didn't notice a thing else an' would hardly answer me when I spoke to him. After a few hours of sich action, I said: 'What ails you, Hiram? Surely you ain't thinkin' of buyin' that ridiculous lookin' fowl to take home;' an' I almost held my breath till he answered. 'No,' says he, 'but I've got a idee in my head.' 'Well,' says I, 'what is it? You have been actin' awful strange about something'; an' he said real solemn: 'If I tell you, you musn't breathe a word of it to any livin' creature, or someone might steal my idee an' ruin all my plans. You see,' says he, p'intin' to the ostrich, 'that bird a-sittin' on them eggs;

"He stood fur hours lookin' at a fool ostrich."

well that's no hen ostrich by a long shot an' his performin' of that duty has put a idee into my head that may land me into the millionair class. If a rooster ostrich can set on eggs an' hatch out ostriches, why can't rooster chickens set on eggs an' hatch out chickens, an' let the hen go on about her business a-supplyin' fresh eggs fur the market?''

'' 'You kin count on about one rooster in a million a-settin' on eggs, not more an' mebby that's a-countin' on one too many,' says I, and he said: 'That's the idee, exactly; them that can set an' won't set, will be made to set, an' there's where I'm goin' to shine as the sole inventor of the Rooster Brooder Machine, an' you bet no more rooster hatchin' power goes to waste after that comes on the market.'

'' 'Well,' says I, with a sigh of relief, 'I'm glad, that's all,' fur I had my fears that he was a-goin' to try to take a live ostrich home on the Pullman cars with us. 'Glad, that's all nothin',' says Hiram, 'tell a woman a great secret that's goin' to astonish the civilized world, an' she says, ''Is that all?'' The only wonder is,' he continued gazin' in at the os-

trich, 'that some one has not grasped the idee before, that this king of fowls has been demonstratin' right before their eyes.'

"Time went on an' I thought he had mebby forgotten all about it, but yesterday as I set sewin' by the west winder I heard a commotion in the chicken yard, an' after a while out comes your Uncle a-carryin' the big buff Cochin rooster under his arm an' over the rooster's head, a la ostrich, was one of them red sox Hiram bought out in California to play lawn tennis in. He made straight fur the hen coop, under a tree, where I'd set old Speck on a dozen eggs that very mornin'. With scant ceremony he yanked her off the nest an' sent her flyin' toward my sweet pea bed, where she lost no time in scratchin' them up. The box where I set Speck was a soap box, an' pretty close quarters fur her, but as she refused to be moved I let her stay. Hiram thrust the General, as we always called that rooster, into the box onto the warm eggs, an' turned to get a stick to fasten him up; the General took advantage of this move an' with one mighty effort he flopped hisself out of the nest, scat-

terin' the eggs right an' left, an' was free. He lit on his head, but soon righted hisself an' went staggerin' on an' the other chickens, seein' the terrible hobgoblin comin' their way, fled for their lives. At the corner of the barn he come face to face upon Gyp, the half-grown fox terrier. With a yelp of terror Gyp broke for the barn, where he soon reappeared at the hay mow door, in the second story, where he barked an' tore around an' got so excited that he fell with a bunch of hay, right into the jaws of the terrible thing he was tryin' to escape from. He picked hisself up, an' lost no time a-reachin' the house, where he watched further proceedin's alongside of me, by standin' on his hind legs an' lookin' out of the window. Tabby, lookin' fur mice, encountered the sock-headed rooster next an' with every hair on end she scooted fur safety under the barn floor. The General, steppin' high, blundered on till he run into a cross old goose, that was settin' on her eggs in a fence corner. With a hiss she made a grab for him an' he, scared nearly stiff at the sudden attack, jumped three feet straight up in the air an' when he got out of her way he

was minus some of his best tail feathers. At this point, Hiram appeared with the soap box again, an' I could see it had three holes in it, an' little legs about three inches long, nailed onto each corner at the bottom. One hole the box was right above the nest an' the other two were on each side of the nest. It was no great trick to ketch the blind-folded General an' in another minute the squallin' an' astonished rooster was a-settin' on them eggs with one leg through each of them lower holes, an' his head an' neck through the one at the top; a few tail feathers stuck through the crack in the box at the back, an' a screen door shut up the place where Hiram had pushed the General in. 'There!' says Hiram, pullin' off the sock from the rooster's head, 'Set or stand, jest as you blamed please,—the eggs will be warm jest the same;' an' he went into the garden to hoe the beans, a-whistlin' 'Everybody Works but Father.' It wa'nt long before old Speck come cluckin' back; things didn't seem to look jest right to her an' she run around the box tryin' to find her nest. Then she flew upon the top of the box, where fur the first time she spied

the old General's head an' neck stickin' up through that hole.

"If consternation, astonishment, an' bewilderment was ever wrote on a hen's countenance it was on ole Speck's, when she discovered the General a-settin' on her nest. With a squall that was almost human in its notes of resentment, an' terror, she dragged her wings on the grass an' circled around an' around the bodyless head of the General. I nearly laughed myself sick as the old General's cockdoodledo joined in with hers, an' he nearly twisted his head off to see what she was a-doin'. By this time all the rest of the chickens, not to mention the ducks an' geese, had come to view the bodyless wonder, an' add their voices to the awful uproar.

"Gyp, havin' recovered from his fright, joined in the chorus an' barked frantically from behind the shelter of my skirts as I went out an' called Hiram. He come in from the garden, an' seatin' hisself on the wheelbarrow, viewed his work with pride. 'It's goin' to be a howlin' success,' says he, referrin' to the box that enclosed the General. 'I've got the details

all worked out even to the little swingin' trough to feed 'em in, which goes on in front, an' an invention that will revolutionize the chicken industry will soon be patented an' on the market. While the model you see is rude, the principle is all right an' the rooster-hatchin' power that has been goin' to waste, is goin' to be utilized fur the good of humanity in general, an' Hiram Harrison in particular.' 'You're not in earnest?' says I; an' he, mad as a hornet, says: 'Not in earnest, when every hour of the day ever since I see that ostrich at Pasadena settin' on the sand I've had this in mind. There's millions in it, I tell you.' 'What would we do with a million?' says I. 'Do,' says he, 'what should we do, but like the rest of them fellars that made their money some sich way, go to California, of course, an' get us a home alongside of the other millionaires on Orange Grove Street in Pasadena? If this thing works out all right I expect to set up there behind my own vine an' fig tree an' hear them carriage drivers holler out to the sight-seein' tourists: "That is the winter home of the great inventor, Hiram Harrison, President of the Rooster Brooder

Machine Company.'' See?' By this time things had quieted down a little an' a storm was a-comin' up, so the chickens come a-hurryin' into their roosts, among them Speck. She was a-singin' to herself an' looked as happy as if she understood an' approved of the new machine that was to relieve her of an irksome duty.

'' 'The machine is a success,' says Hiram, 'do you grasp that fact, Pheba?' 'I grasp one fact,' says I. 'What is it?' says he, real interested.

'' 'Why,' says I, 'the fact that the best way to break up a stubborn settin' hen is to put an old rooster on her nest, an' let his head stick up through a hole in the top of the box an' scare the wits out of her.' ''

Aunt Pheba Expresses Her Opinion of Southern Californians Real Freely—Women Are Good Looking, but the Men Are Merely Polite — A Little Sermon, Pleasantly Disguised, on the Female Weakness of Extravagance.

## APARTMENT-HOUSE LIFE

"DO YOU want to know how the California folks compare in looks to the folks back here?" said Aunt Pheba Harrison. "Well, Mandy, good-lookin' wimmen I saw a-plenty, but the men, especially good-lookin' young men, were scarce, very scarce. By young men, I mean men between the ages of twenty-five an' forty-five, who ain't never been married or divorced, or had their wives to die on' em.

"But one good word I will say for the California men, they were the politest set of men I ever see. In the stores, street cars, or restaurants, 'twas jest the same. It used to tickle me to see how mad your Uncle Hiram would get when they got up an' give me a seat, or handed me my jacket or umbrel in a restaurant, or opened the doors for me, when he was slow about it.

" 'Polite nothin',' he would say, 'ten to one

them same door-openin' an' handkerchief-pickin'-up men let their wimmen get up first an' build the kitchen fire, on a cold mornin'. I can't see the sense,' said he, 'of a man breakin' his back jumpin' to pick up things fur a woman, an' helpin' her along the street like's if she was a basket of eggs he was afraid of breakin', when she's strong enough to look out fur herself an' could jump over a rail fence if anyone hollered "snakes!" '

" 'It's downright wicked,' he complained, 'to expect a man to come up smilin', whenever a woman calls time on him, an' help her into the street car an' give up his seat, when his wife has worn him to a frazzle doin' a dozen department stores, an' treadin' miles of pavements, an' stoppin' fur hours, gazin' in at them gee-gaws on dummy wimmen in the show windows, that he didn't even sense. If a woman is stout enough to tear around from one store to another all day she can load herself up onto the street car, an' pick up her own things when she drops 'em, an' open her own doors or stay inside jest as she feels like it. Doin' all them little things fur a woman, who's better able

to do 'em fur herself, ain't consistent, nor it hain't common sense.'

"'Mebby it ain't common sense,' says I, 'an' mebby it ain't consistent, but the wimmen folks like it jest the same.' I bought Hiram some neckties an' things at a Pasadena clothin' store, an' about a month afterwards we went by that store again; in the doorway stood the red-cheeked, smilin' clerk dressed like one of his own fashion plates. He remembered me in a minute, an' smiled an' bowed low, awful low. Not expectin' to see anyone we knowed, Hiram was kind of startled, an' I said: 'What made you kind of jump, when that clerk bowed to me?' an' he said: 'O, nothin', only at first I thought 'twas one of them dressed-up dummies a-fallin' over, an' I was a-goin' to ketch it.'

"But seein' others polite had its effect on your Uncle Hiram in time, an' I shall never forget the first time I ever see him give up his seat in a street car to a lady. We was a-goin' out to Westlake Park an' the car was quite full. Hiram was a-settin' in between two wimmen an' front of him a-teeterin', an' swayin', an' holdin' onto a strap, was the fattest woman I

most ever see. Hiram pretended not to see her fur awhile, an' then gettin' ashamed of hisself, he got up an' offered her his seat. The woman looked critically at the little space Hiram had been occupyin' an' then with a smile, in which disappointment an' gratitude was mingled, she shook her head at him a-declinin' of his offer. It seemed to me everyone in the car looked at the little space Hiram offered her, an' smiled; an' Hiram, mad as a wet hen, went out an' stood on the platform with the motorman.

"But to get back to the subject we started out on. I guess the reason good-lookin' young men seem scarce in California is because the wimmen outnumber 'em two to one. It ain't no uncommon sight to see a good-lookin' elegantly-dressed woman a-hangin' onto the ordinarest sort of a man, an' half a dozen other wimmen, goin' it alone, lookin' on in envy. Fur instance, in that apartment house where we stayed, there was about a dozen marriageable men, an' nearly twice that number of girls, not to mention an army of both kinds of widows. Amongst the men there was two real old bachelors, an' a real old widower. By real old I

mean three score an' ten; anything younger than that is considered in his prime out there, till they get down below forty-five, an' then they are considered in the 'boy class.' To be fair to all, there was two good-lookin' chaps in the lot who used to scoot across the ladies' parlor to the elevator like's if there was Indians after them. Then there was two college students, an' a tourist man, an' a society dude.

"The blonde typewriter girl captured the rich old widower in the first round, so he was counted out. She acted real proud of him an' he spruced around with a rose in his coat, an' a smile on his 'freshly-shaven gills.' Then there was a real nice-lookin' man an' a red-headed woman who et together in the cafe an' so on. The old fellow who had horses on the brain said: 'They was jest scorin' round doin' time, an' waitin' fur the year to be up so as they could marry each other.' He said: 'When folks get a divorce out here, an' figuratively speakin' are out of the harness, the law still keeps a lariat rope on 'em in the shape of a year's wait before they can trot in double harness again.'

"While the men in that apartment house wan't in the same class as the wimmen fur looks, they all seemed like real sensible, nice folks except that society dude. His pa was General Somebody an' him an' his wife nearly bored folks to death, tellin' 'em cute things Algy did when a baby. The General, when he wasn't dinin' out, stood at the 'phone most of the time makin' social engagements for hisself an' wife an' Algy. I used to get disgusted the way them pretty girls made over that dude young man. If he'd been good-lookin' or even smart-lookin' 'twould a' been different, but he wore awful funny-lookin' clothes, an' parted his hair queer; he had a low forehead, while the rest of his dished-in face was mostly chin. He acted so important, an' smoked a nasty-smellin' pipe, all over the girls' pretty clothes, an' he listened like as if he was bored when one after another of them tried their luck for theater tickets with him.

"I got quite friendly with a pretty girl who lived with her pa an' ma on the same floor we did. She had a fine-lookin' beau from Seattle, but girl-like she must try her luck with Algy

too. She came into my room one day sayin' she was mad enough to fight. Said Algy had proposed to her an' was willin' to marry her if her pa would give him twenty-five thousand dollars. He said he could marry another girl whose pa would give him thirty-five thousand, which wan't any more than his social position was worth, but as he happened to be in love with her (the twenty-five thousand girl) he thought he would give her the first chance.

"The pretty girl was so disgusted with his good opinion of hisself that she told him whenever she got ready to buy a man, she would get her pa to bid a little higher an' get her a real man instid of a monkey-faced dude. I guess it didn't break his heart tho, fur he was married a month later to the thirty-five-thousand-dollar girl, who was nearly a foot taller than him an' had a face on her like that Swede girl who used to work for us. But her pa was proud of the General's social standin', an' bought 'em a house out on the Bonnie Brae district an' a big red automobile. I saw 'em together once an' they acted like as if they didn't know which one had got the worst of

the bargain. But then they tell me, bein' in society, they needn't see each other more'n once or twice a month an' not make talk either.

"It seemed awful mercenary to hear folks talkin' about marryin' fur money at first, but then to be fair all around, the wimmen brought it onto themselves by dressin' so extravagant, for it's a well-known fact that the wimmen of Southern California are the best-dressed wimmen in the United States. One young man said a man who wasn't rich couldn't afford to even keep company with a society girl an' take 'em to high-priced plays an' suppers an' such things; an' as for the poor girls, they all know real lace an' diamonds when they see them, an' want 'em worse than the ones who have always had 'em. 'I'd hate to see my wife go plain an' other wimmin havin' things,' says he, 'so the only way to do is to stay single or marry for money;' an' when I see a woman payin' ninety dollars fur a wash dress I didn't blame him.

"One sees all sorts of people at close range in an apartment house. The folks who lived across the hall from us fit, an' made up, time

an' again. One night he come home in a bad humor. He was a real estate agent, an' thinkin' to make a sale, had hauled a party around all day, an' then they asked him to take them an' their baggage to the station, as they were goin' East, an' jest ridin' around to kill time till their train come.

"Well, his wife had limburger cheese for supper, an' bein', as I said, in a bad humor, he picked up the dish an' hove it out of the window, where it broke to pieces on some rocks. She bein' auburn-haired an' spunky, picked up another dish an' hoved it after his'n. They kept it up till they throwed every dish out of the window into the back yard. They then went to the cupboard an' throwed them out, till they come to the last dish. It was his throw, but he was a polite man, an' she bein' a lady, he bowed an' gave the dish to her, an' she throwed it after the rest. The next mornin' I see 'em arm in arm, good as pie, goin' down town to buy new dishes.

"Take it all in all, I liked the excitement of the apartment house life, but Hiram 'lowed six months of it would spile the best woman

that ever lived, an' turn her into a gossipin', gaddin' creature, pickin' every other woman she see to pieces. 'Why,' says he, 'it's them idle women that crowd them department stores tryin' to break up their men a-buyin' things. From the looks of them stores you'd think every woman in Southern California had took out a permit to be a sole trader.

" 'Them stores,' says he, 'tells the story of who spends the money in California; 'bout a thousand wimmen crowdin' round them bargain counters an' mebby a dozen or so scared-lookin' men tryin' to get out of their way. Got wedged in there one day when I was tryin' to buy some twenty-five-cent galluses, an' had to call on the floor walker to get me out. I'm afraid you are contractin' them spendin'-money habits, too, Pheba; a man told me 'twas something in the air that made good economical wimmen back home want to spend every dollar they can get, jest as soon as they cross the Californy line. I tho't when I see you a-buyin' that lace t'other day, Pheba, we'd better be goin' home. Stood up as big as you please an' paid four dollars a yard fur that fillay

lace, with good strong pillow-case lace, right acrost the aisle, sellin' two yard fur a quarter. Then them uncurled ostrich fixens you had put on your hat didn't look a mite better than them bronze turkey feathers that's a-goin' to waste at home. Then you let Herman's wife put you up to cut your cuffs off an' wear them long stockin'-leg things on your arms, an' then thirty dollars fur a ostrich feather neck ruff, when your black cashmere shawl would a' kept your neck a lot warmer.'

"But the funny part of it was, Mandy, after all your Uncle's fussin' he never would let me wear my old things, after he got used to the new things. Said I looked like I 'just come over,' an' sich things. Ain't that jest like him, anyway?

"After that fall off that ladder, I had a twinge of rheumatism in my arm, so we went down to the Hot Springs for a few weeks. An old woman, who put me in mind of Burns's woman, 'whose nose an' chin did threaten other,' set in the same car seat with me, an' asked me what I was goin' there for. I told her fur my health, an' after lookin' me over a

minute she said: 'You must be one of them healthy invalids I've hear tell of, a-runnin' up an' down California, an' havin' a good time.'

"A funny thing happened at them springs, too. I've read of sich things, but I actually see this myself. It wasn't very funny, tho, to the poor man it happened to, an' him tryin' to put his best foot forward with a new wife. He wan't as young as he had been once, an' had his beard an' hair dyed a jet black. He had rheumatiz, too, an' thinkin' to combine sickness with pleasure, he come down to the Hot Springs an' took a course of baths. In a few days the sulphur an' other minerals in the water had turned his black hair an' beard a rich olive green. In desperation he rushed from one remedy to another tryin' to turn 'em black again, but the best he could do was to turn 'em a brick red. That at least was one step back toward nature, for a red-headed man don't look half as queer as a green-headed one.

"But he wa'n't satisfied, so he shaved off his beard, an' mowed his head till he looked like a big red beet; honestly, when he got through he was the ugliest man I ever laid eyes on, an'

the new wife who had never seen him 'thout his dyed whiskers an' hair was so discouraged she didn't show herself for a week. I told Hiram, then an' there, that havin' a beard was one p'int where the men had the wimmen beaten. If a woman has a weak, wobbly chin, an' a mouth that occupies most of the territory below her eyes, she must go through life, an' face the world just so. But with a man it is different. A beard will cover up a multitude of defective features.

" 'Well,' says Hiram, 'I guess nature ginerally knows what she is doin'. Yes,' he says, 'nature see at once it wouldn't be safe to make wimmen anythin' but smooth-faced.' 'Why?' says I, knowin' well enough, too, that he'd answer back something mean to uphold the men, an' he said: 'Cause she'd never quit talkin' long enough to get shaved.' "

Uncle Hiram Tries Out His New Automobile, With Doubtful Results—Also Creates Sensation at La Fiesta, but Confidence Is Unshaken and Regrets He Did Not Enter Auto and Carry Out Nebraska Idea.

## AT LA FIESTA

"WE HADN'T much more than got settled in that new house, Mandy," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "before your Uncle brought home that ottermobile an' then my trouble commenced. If I wan't ready an' anxious to go every time he did, he took it as a personal insult, an' a reflection on his ability to protect me, an' holdin' my breath with fear, I sot upon that puffin', snortin' thing that run backwards as often as any other way, knowin' I dasen't get out 'thout a fuss, an' wishin' the thing would throw me out an' end the suspense. I wanted Hiram to keep a man to run it till he got expert, but he said: 'If an intellergint man like Hiram Harrison has to get a cheffewer to run an ottermobile after he has run steam thrashers an' things, he'd better take a back seat. I'll run her, er bust her,' says he. An' he done both.

"Nothin' would do but we must get otter-

mobile things, an' when we put 'em on fur the first time an' met each other unexpectedly in the back yard, we was scairt, an' when Hiram got his breath back he says: 'There'll be horses runnin' off when they see you in them goggles an' that dinky little cap; couldn't a had a mile er two more of vailin' wropped aroun' yer head, could you? You're a sight in them shoes an' elbow length skirt; why in creation couldn't a got somethin' natty like me?'

"As fur him he was rigged out in leggins an' things till he looked like a cowboy in Buffalo Bill's wild west show. We got into the ottermobile an' the only accident we had a gettin' out of the yard was knockin' down one gatepost, which was an improvement on previous performances. A few miles out into the country we run into a redheaded Irish woman leadin' a cow; said cow bein' on one side of the road an' the woman on t'other, an' the two attached to each other with a rope. We was almost on 'em before we see the rope, an' the cow commenced to throw up her head an' kick up her hind legs an' caper, an' the ottermobile bein' stopped off so sudden done the same. Honestly

you'd a thought 'twas a livin' critter that was scairt as bad at that old cow as she was at it. Hiram got addled, an' geehawed an' counterbalanced that machine till it fairly danced, an' all the time that rope was twistin' itself 'round the gearin' an' gettin' shorter an' the cow was gettin' scairter, an' the Irish woman was gettin' madder. When Hiram gets real excited he's a little cross-eyed, altho you dasen't tell him so, an' when he see what a mess he'd got the woman into he commenced to apologize, an' she, thinkin' by the way he was lookin' that he was addressin' the cow, said: 'Apologize to the baste uv a cow, will ye, while a dacent Irish woman stands by entirely ignored? Oi've a good moind to give ye a batin' an' prod the wind out uv that snortin' thing with me sharp stick.'

"By this time things looked serious an' I wanted to climb out over the back of the machine, but Hiram said whenever I lost confidence in his powers to pertect me 'twas time to part, so I, driven most desprit, said to anyone who would listen: 'The cow's climbin' into my lap; can't someone cut the rope?' Hiram

hadn't tho't of that, an' had his knife out in a jiffy, an' slashed the rope to bits, an' the Irish woman said: ' 'Tis lucky fur me the whole family wasn't born idiots er my cow would a bin kilt entoirely. Five dollars ye'll pay me just the same fur the shock to me an' the cow's falin's, not to mintion the bran' new rope,' an' as Hiram put his hand in his pocket she added: 'Oi'm not goin' to be chated by any little cross-eyed billy goat uv a mon'—jest then, whether by accident er design I never knowed, the machine gives a snort, an' a jump, an' jest missin' the Irish woman, an' hittin' the old cow who stood at what she thought a safe distance, viewin' things, a clip on the head, we was off like a shot. When I caught my breath I looked back an' saw the Irish woman shakin' her fist at us, an' no doubt sayin' some interestin' things. An' Hiram just chuckled to hisself all the way home, 's if he had done something smart.

"The very next day we saw the Flower festival in Los Angeles, an' it was grand. 'Twas an excitin' time fur me, aside frum the parade, which was excitement enough fur one day. I

never see so many flowers, an' ottermobiles, an' prancin' horses, an' pretty dressed wimmen in all my life before. We went down town early, so as to get a good place to view the parade frum. I wanted to get the first seats I see on the line where the parade was goin', but your Uncle Hiram got a stingy streak on him that mornin', an' when he see the seats marked fifty cents an' a dollar, he said 'twas a 'regular hold up' an' said 'we'd go on till we see some fur a quarter.'

"That's where I missed it, by follerin' your Uncle, when I should a set down in one of them seats an' let him grouched till he got through. When I told him I'd be ashamed, if I was him, for bein' so tight-fisted, he said: 'Tight-fisted nothin'; it hain't the money I'm thinkin' of so much as reskin' you on one of them little pie-plate seats, or on them little four-inch boards that woud like as not break off short when you got good an' settled. 'Twould raise a big hubadoo an' that sensational paper that makes a speciality of sich things would rush sketch artists here to make a sketch of you on the spot, an' like as not when they got through drawin'

you they'd draw up some awful lookin' thing an' put in the paper alongside of your picture with readin' under it sayin': "This is Hiram Harrison, husband of Pheba, the big woman who wrecked a section of seats while viewin' of the Fiester Parade." 'Twould disgrace me all over Lancaster county. If I'd a tho't I'd bro't a board,' says he. 'I wouldn't a minded to a bought three seats an' put the board acrost, an' 'twould a done fur both of us, an' we'd a bin safe an' comfortable. None of them little scantlin' an' bicycle seats, at fifty each, fur me.'

"By this time the crowd was as thick as at a Bryan meetin', an' the seats were all gone, an' the only hopes of us seein' the parade was to hang onto the little foot holt we had on the edge of the sidewalk. The sun was hot, an' the wimmen's hats were on crooked, an' the powder off their noses, an' the children were cross; an' thinkin' how foolish I'd bin not gettin' a seat when I had the chance didn't make my temper any evener; I believe 'twas the thickest crowd I ever was in, so thick we couldn't even h'ist our umbrel to keep off the

sun. As we stood there waitin', a man tried to break through our lines an' get under the stretched rope to the street, but the crowd pushed an' jawed him an' wouldn't budge an inch.

"He took it good-natured, but kept tryin' to get through, sayin' he was a doctor goin' to see a sick patient; but as he didn't have any medicine case they jeered him worse than ever. When he pushed toward Hiram an' crowded us wimmen, Hiram raised that shut umbrel, likes if 'twas a bayonet, an' says: 'Give the right password an' quit crowdin' them wimmen, er I'll run you through an' through with this umbrel.' Then the man motioned to a policeman an' told him his story an' the policeman cut a path through fur the doctor by usin' his club.

"As Hiram stood back at the club's p'int to let the man through, a big woman (I looked little beside her) slipped in front of us an' planted herself on the edge of the sidewalk into our old places, entirely obscurin' our view of the street. Hiram asked her to go back an' let us have the places we'd held so long, but

she pretended to be deaf. He said: 'There's nothin' left but to push ourselves into our old place;' but she stood stock still an' never moved a muscle. 'I don't believe anythin' short of a derrick kin move her,' says he. 'I believe she's turned to stone; I'm as weak as a cat when it comes to her. I guess 'twill take several of us jined together to fetch 'er.' Several wimmen who had lost front places in the shuffle offered to help, but I, bein' disgusted with him 'bout them seats, said real short: 'I didn't come here to jine any pushin' matches. I wish I was out of here; 'twould be all I'd ask. I'm sick of things.' 'I'll git you out, Pheba,' says your Uncle. 'You'll do wonders,' says I, sarcastically like. That made him mad as a hornet, fur I can't insult Hiram Harrison quicker than to doubt his ability to take care of me. 'I kin get you out of here in five minutes, yes, two of them,' says he. 'Try it,' says I, an' I never regretted two words as much in my life, fur your Uncle grabbed me 'round the waist an' commenced fannin' me with his hat an' all the time yellin' to that policeman: 'Woman faintin'! get her out of here, quick!' an' in a jiffy

that policeman had clubbed a path fur me, an' him, an' Hiram, an' before I could sense what was goin' on, I was out to the edge of the sidewalk where an ottermobile with somethin' about 'Emergency' painted on it stood waitin'. I could see the ottermobile was a little more than your Uncle had counted on, but he never let on, an' hopped up into it hauling me after him by both arms, while the sympathetic young Irish policeman assisted by fairly liftin' me bodily into the vehicle, an' with considerable blowin' of gongs we was off.

"I never said a word; in fact, I was so indignant with Hiram I wouldn't a said a word if they'd a took me to jail. After goin' a few blocks Hiram told the man who was runnin' the ottermobile that his wife had revived so, by gettin' into the fresh air, he guessed he wouldn't bother him to go any further. I guess the man wasn't used to having his patients come to so quick, fur he looked perfectly dumfounded when he looked 'round an' see me settin' up there, as well as anybody, 'cept I was as mad as a wet hen.

" 'If it's agin the rules, mebby that will fix

it,' says Hiram, handin' him somethin'; when the man shook his head, Hiram says, 'fur the charity fund, then;' an' the man put whatever Hiram gave him in his pocket, an' smilin' all over, let us out, right in front of a store where there was some nice seats that hadn't bin taken, marked a dollar apiece; we got into our seats just in time to see the parade start, an' mad as I was at the way I got there, I enjoyed myself furst rate, considerin' what I'd bin through.

"As we set down, Hiram said, boastfully: 'Mebby in time, Pheba, you'll get on to the fact that when Hiram Harrison says he'll do a thing he ginerally does it.' 'Most anyone could, if they don't care what they do,' says I, feelin' cross at the show I'd made of myself an' thankin' my lucky stars I was in a strange crowd; but the parade was too interestin' to argue over what had already bin done, so I settled back with a sigh of relief to enjoy it.

"Hiram fretted a good deal durin' the parade about bein' a few days too late to enter his new ottermobile. 'I'd a fixed up somethin' that would a made 'em stare,' says he. 'There's no doubt of it,' says I, dryly, not

bein' in the humor to side in with him too much. 'That black team trimmed in yeller is a corker,' says he. 'An' to my mind that woman ridin' in the kerridge is the stunnenist female in the parade. I allus said yeller was the becomenest color for pretty, plump wimmen, with good complections. Now, we could a represented Nebraska fustrate, an' we'd a done it, sure as fate, if we'd a got our ottermobile in time.' I trembled at the narrer escape I'd had, for he'd a done it or had a fuss.

" 'Let's see,' says he, 'I'd a used corn blades for the foundation trimmin' of my ottermobile; a fringe of corn blades hangin' graceful like 'round the whole vehikle, headed by a set row of sunflowers. Then you could a carried a parasol kivered with corn blades, with small roastin' ear nubbins a finishin' off the top an' rib ends of the parasol. You would a looked well, too, in one of them wide sailer effect hats, trimmed with a wreath of big sunflowers 'round the crown, an' a bunch of them sewed onto the under parts, behind. Then them new streamer effects could a bin carried out by green corn blades floatin' gracefully 'round, er looped into

place with sunflower chow-chows an' rosettes. You'd a bin a study in yeller an' greenness,' says he.

"'No doubt about the greenness,' says I, an' mistakin' my sarcasm fur fact, he says: 'Well, of course bein's Nebraska more noted fur a corn state than fur flowers, we'd likely use most green, so as not to infringe on Kansas. You could a stitched them corn blades onto cloth to make 'em stout, an' used 'em fur galluses over your white waist, givin' that new jumper suit effect like Herman's wife wears. A belt somethin' similar would a looked smart, but you'd a had to pieced them little corn blades they raise out here several times to make 'em reach 'round. Then a yeller skirt trimmed balmoral style with sewed on corn blades would a completed what I'd a called a strikin' costume, an' who knows but 'twould a took a prize? Then to carry out the Nebraska idee further, we'd a had a cute little shoat painted on the ottermobile somewheres, with a wreath of corn-tassels surroundin' it, an' little motto sayin': "Corn is King," er "Hogs an' Hominy beats—"'

" 'Don't dare paint any sich stuff on anything I'm goin' to ride in,' says I, not knowin' what he might do yet, an' he growled back: 'Shucks, I never could do anything new an' uneke fur you. Them foreign fellers have lions an' eagles an' things that hain't half as useful as a hog painted on their vehicles all the time, an' I was jest tryin' to carry out a certain idee fur one day.'

" 'Well,' says I, ' 'twouldn't be a popular idee, anyway, fur the folks out here kind of poke fun at the "hog an' hominy" states.'

" 'Fun nothing,' says your Uncle, gettin' red in the face. 'I notice they air gettin' up all the schemes you ever hear tell of to get the "hog an' hominy" dollars out of us.' 'Shucks,' says he, gettin' madder, 'jest as if sich money hain't as good as money made by keepin' store an' hotels an' holdin' office an' sellin' real estate an' sellin' drinks an' sich. An' I'm willin' to leave it to any sane person if a field of wavin' corn blades hain't as purty as them dusty pam leaves, an' sun flowers as purty as that yaller mustard.'

" 'Then I'd had a yeller an' green suit made

like that feller on the black horse. A Zooave jacket would be jest the thing—too bad it's too late,' said he, sadly. After watchin' the parade awhile he slapped his hand on the back of my chair an' laffin' right out loud said, 'I've got it.' 'What?' says I, 'that flea you've bin chasin' all mornin'?' 'Flea, nothin',' says he, 'funny I'd furget it. I heard a man say last week there was goin' to be a Santa Ana. Santa Ana used to be a great general er something, an' I wouldn't be surprised if 'twould take the form of a military as well as a flower parade. In that case I kin kerry out the idee I've outlined an' give the military touch by havin' you carry a flag, bein's I will be occupied a runnin' the ottermobile. Lucky thing fur me, this Santa Ana parade!' Then I laughed till I nearly shook the seat down, an' Hiram, lookin' cross, said: 'If you don't tell me what tickles you I'll call another policeman;' an' I managed to say: 'A Santa Ana is a wind an' dust storm.'

"Your Uncle despises a joke on hisself, so he answered as bold as brass: 'I knowed it;' but he didn't."

# Aunt Pheba Does the Apartment House, Gets the Gossipitis, Goes to the Ioway Picnic at Eastlake Park, Becomes Indignant Over Emblem Suggested for Nebrasky.

## NEBRASKA EMBLEM

"WHEN me and your Uncle visited some cousins on my side in a little mining town in Californy, we went with the folks to a lodge entertainment one night. They had speakin' an' musick an' refreshments; your Uncle 'low'd that he'd seen refreshiner things than them two cove oysters he et, with some warm water fur soup.

"The first thing on the programme was a pome to be spoke by a large, raw-boned woman about forty-five with a voice on her like a grafaphone. She come onto the stage nearly on the run an' got so near the edge of the platform that when she made her bow she come nigh toplin' overboard.

"She was flustrated bad enough before, but after this little accident she seemed scared nearly stiff, but after a moment's wait she commenced to declaim in a loud voice, as if someone was a goin' to contradict her:

"'It is comin', it is comin',
I can feel it in the air.'

"Then she stopped an' looked helplessly 'round. After waitin' till we tho't she was goin' to give it up, she drawed a long breath an' commenced again.

"'It is comin', it is comin',' she repeated, but it didn't come any better than before; in fact, not so well, an' when a smarty back by the door hollered out, 'Let 'er come,' she set down in despair, leavin' us to wonder if 'twas spring, or rheumatism, er what, she was feelin' in the air.

"The woman's failure must a got on the nerves of the awkward half-grown girl who responded to the call of her name next, fur she was so scared she never got any further than her bow.

"Her mother, who was a-settin' in the center of the audience, hopin' to refresh her daughter's memory, recited the first verse, but still the girl stood there as if turned to stone, gazin' at her mother, who, by now, had claimed the attention of us all, an' we listened while she

spoke the whole pome. When her mother quit speakin' the girl seemed to come out of her trance an', bowing low, she set down without ever speakin' one word.

"Yes, we stayed at that apartment house in Los Angeles quite a spell, an' in some ways it was grand, fur when we got tired of the restaurants we could go to them delicate-essents stores an' buy 'most anything, from five cents' worth of baked beans to a turkey, ready cooked, an' eat it on our own table.

"You could get a Jap where we stayed, by payin' him a little extra, to do most of the mussy work, an' it was nice to be able to go out in the parlor 'long with about fifty other wimmen, an' read the mornin' paper an' embroider, an' there, it's out at last!—gossip. 'Tain't no trick at all to get acquainted in them apartment houses. I hadn't bin there two days before a tall, lanky woman, with little, beady, black eyes that seemed to look through you, took me under her wing an' told me the history of most everybody in the house, sayin', 'See that little body goin' up in the elevator? Yes, the one with the bleached hair an' the blue Rus-

sian blouse jacket—well, she has had three husbands; buried one, divorced one, an' is livin' here with hubby No. 3. Look at that red-headed woman coming down the stairs—the one wearin' them high-heeled shoes an' the lingerie waist. Look at her sharp, an' tell me what you think. You don't mean to say you don't notice nuthin' wrong with her? That woman had her face skinned last fall.' 'Automobile accident?' I asked, an' she said, 'I should say not; she was ingaged to marry a man ten years younger than herself an' she went to a beauty doctor an' had the skin on her face literally taken off, wrinkles an' all; he played a trick on her tho that nearly tickled the rest of us ladies to death. He fixed up one side first an' then taxed her a hundred dollars extra to fix the other side; she kicked, but he threatened to send the account to her beau, so she paid it. Made her look younger all right, but we ladies call her the American Flag, because on a hot day she's red, on a medium day white, an' on a cold day she's blue. See them three wimmen goin' into the cafe? Grass widows, every one of them. Pretty? Of course; it hardly pays a woman to go to the

trouble of gettin' a divorce 'less she is, for a grass widow don't seem to think it's any great feather in their caps to be divorced, like the men do out here. See that woman goin' up to the landlord? The one with the flat nose an' her under jaw stickin' out like a cow ketcher, in front. She's a real widow, an' the airs she puts on over the other kind because hers is a dead instid of a livin' trouble is comikel to see. Her husband has been dead five months, an' she openly avows her intention of marryin' agin, sayin' that is the greatest compliment a woman can pay her dead husband, is to marry soon, very, very soon. She is a regular bargain counter fiend. She bought her husband's things to bury him in a year before he really died, an' her own mournin' outfit, too. She answered a advertisement in a matrimonel paper an' the fellow, a seven-footer who weighed about a hundred pounds an' lived in some little backwoods town, came to see her one day a ridin' a horse so small he had to bend his knees to keep his feet off the ground. He was a hard lookin' dose, but I guess she tho't she might put him on a milk diet an' fatten him up er

somethin', fur she took to him right away, but one look at her mug done him, an' he was in sich a hurry to get away that he clim onto his horse an' tried to ride it off without first unhitchin' it.

"'There goes the propritor an' his wife,' she kept on, as the homely widow left the room. 'See her diamonds shine—they say that's what went with most of the money when they broke up in business back east. Chated the creditors shamefully.

"'See that portly man in the shabby suit? He owns this building, an' is a millinar. He took the typewriter girl down to Santa Monica on an outin', an' treated her to a twenty-five cent fish dinner—stingiest man in Los Angeles County.

"'There he's goin' out with that crowd. I'll bet he wouldn't if he knowed some things about 'em I do, but I allus make it a rule never to say a word about what I see er hear in this house.'

"A month er so later me an' your Uncle had some friends a collin' on us in the apartment house parlors. The little lady with the bleached

hair an' the blue pony jacket passed through the room to the elevator.

" 'See that little lady," says I, 'the one with the bleached hair an' the blue Russian blouse? She's had three husbands; buried one, divorced one, an' is livin' here with hubby No. 3.' My voice sounded holler an' fur away—your Uncle looked at me in mild astonishment over his specks—the others smiled—I was learnin' fast —at last I had caught that dreadful apartment house disease—Gossipitis.

"It was time to move, an' we did.

"Some folks who stayed in the next apartment to us invited us to go to their state picnic with 'em an' we went. It's a regular fad, them state picnics out in Californy. Iowa claimed she could scare up the biggest crowd, an' from the way they scrouged us into them street cars I guess she was right.

"We saw lots of funny meetin's betwixt folks who hadn't seen each other fur years. One oldish couple who looked like they hadn't bin off the farm fur years an' years stood under their county tree, both laffin' an' talkin' at

once an' actin' like they was havin' the time of their two lives.

"The man, who never would a stood any chance at a beauty show, was tall an' lank an' reminded me of them burlesque pictures them cartoonests make of Uncle Sam. The wife was as fat an' short as her mate was tall an' lean; she wore a three-ply double chin an' had her whisp of faded blond hair twisted into the tightest little knot at the back of her head you ever see. A big hair pin as long as a dinner fork an' out of all proportions to the little dab of hair was stuck through it. Her little short-backed sailer hat made her flamin' red face look as big an' round as a dishpan. But she was a good-natured soul an' her blue eyes beamed, an' she shook like a bowl full of jelly as she laughed at the smart things her husband was a-sayin'. They was both of them in a hilarious mood, an' the old feller cracked jokes, an' blowed his long nose into a big bandana handkerchief that looked like a little tablecloth.

"In the midst of their fun a fine lookin' man, a profeshional man of some sort, stepped from his automobile an' made straight fur the tree

where the Iowa couple was a standin' an' signed his name in the little book tied to the tree. When the Iowa couple see the name they both said, almost in the same breath, 'Doc Wheeler from the Forks.' In a second the old feller had borne down onto the astonished Doctor, sayin', 'Hello, Doc Wheeler, I'll bet a hoss you don't know me—I'm Abe Hanks from the Forks, back in Ioway. Hain't see ye before fur 'bout forty year, er since I left ye in the army an' ye come out west to Californy, an' I went back home to Ioway an' merried the gal ye was ingaged to afore ye inlisted. Me an' Fanny was talkin' 'bout ye t'other day an' laffin 'bout the time ye set up with her so late, her pap come in an' told ye breakfast was ready; an' the time the sled broke down an' ye had to ride four in a seat home from the Turkey Run singin' schule. Like to see ye git four of her into a sled seat now,' an' the man from Iowa laffed till I tho't he'd choke, an' give the addled Doctor a slap on the back that would a felled a weaker man, as he fairly dragged him toward the beamin' Fanny.

"Durin' the whole performance the aston-

ished Doctor never opened his mouth to say a word, but gazed, as if spell-bound, at his sweetheart of earlier days, as if tryin' to bridge the chasm of forty years.

"Right here a automobile shut off my view, so I turned my attentions to two pretty girls in the Doctor's auto, who were laughin' good an' hard at 'the joke on papa.'

"Yes, the folks out there don't furgit there old humes, an' I notice the folks from here know how to stand up fur Nebrasky, too.

"That reminds me of gettin' that sofa piller burned fur Mrs. Dillingham. She's got her house full of Californy souvnirs, so I tho't I'd have something suggestin' Nebrasky burned on her piller; but bless me if I could think of a thing. I even furgot the name of our state flower.

"At last the man, gettin' tired of waitin', said, kind of sarcastic like:

" 'Why not have a hog with a ear of corn in its mouth burned on your piller?' Say, I was mad clear through, an' I let him keep his goods fur bein' so smart."

Uncle Hiram Goes to Catalina Rather Than Take Water on Properly Touring California—Gets Seasick and Gives Out His Biography, but Lives to Capture a Mountain Goat and Write a Prize Pome.

## AT CATALINA

"I THOUGHT, Mandy, we'd done all the beaches an' summer resorts we was a-goin' to," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "but the very next day after we was at Venice your Uncle announced his intention of goin' to Catalina, by sayin': 'I see I've got to go; every tourist I talk to says almost with his first breath: "I reckon you've bin to Catalina?" an' every four letters out of five I git frum back home says: "How did you like Catalina?" so you see, while I'd ruther 'most die than risk that awful seasickness, we'll have to go, er take water on properly tourin' Californy furever.'

" 'If you go you'll go alone,' says I, an' he answered back: 'Alone nothin'. If the only wife I've got is willin' to see me go abroad, all alone, an' die of seasickness on shipboard, let 'er. But this I'll say here an' now, after I'm

passed, don't you go snifflin' 'round into no little dinky black-bordered handkerchief, a tellin' the nabers you allus tried to do your duty to Hiram Harrison.'

"Of course, after sich talk, I give in an' went. You ought to have seen the preparations your Uncle made fur the trip. He bought four big hot-water bags, an' blowed 'em full of wind an' carried 'em two in front an' two behind, an' tied together with strings, an' slung over his shoulders. The folks on the way to the boat stared at him like's if they thot he was crazy, an' I was mortified to death. Then somebody told him newspapers soaked in vinegar an' laid on the chest, back an' front, was good fur seasickness, so he stuffed his underclothes so full of papers he looked top-heavy fur his legs; he also tied a bag of asfedty 'round his neck, an' most drove folks out of the street car with it an' the vinegar smell together. He 'lowed 'twould be a good idee not to eat anything fur a couple of days before startin', an' done so, but he got so hungry the mornin' we started he et the biggest meal he'd et in ten years, an' spiled all his fastin' effects.

"I fussed with him about the show he was a makin' of hisself, but he was firm, an' says: 'If the ship's wrecked them water bottles will keep me afloat, an' if she hain't wrecked you can fill 'em with hot water, an' pack 'em 'round my anatomy when I'm seasick.' We hadn't bin aboard an hour before Hiram keeled over in the throes of seasickness. A seasicker man I never see, an' after the most violent contortions an' symptoms subsided enough to let him speak, he gasped out: 'I'm done fur, Pheba, an' tell the folks back home I died tryin' to get to Catalina, an' hope they're satisfied. I was druv to it, Pheba, an' I had a presentation 'twould end this way. Put your hand into my britches pocket, Pheba, an' take out my pocketbook an' things. Amongst the papers you will find a writ article headed: "Byografee of Hiram Harrison, by Hisself," which I want you to hand to the editor who prints my obituary, an' when she's printed I hope you'll take notice there was plenty of things to write about that was of more importance than squints, an' corns, an' moles. You had better—' Right here another agonizin' paroxyism seized him,

an' I was so scairt I never thought of the paper an' things again until we was safely settled into our rooms at the Metropole, an' Hiram had recovered enough to mosey around the grounds. Then, as I was all alone, I took out the paper an' read: 'Byografee of Hiram Harrison, by Hisself. I was born somewheres in Posey County, Indiany; my folks moved so often I never could locate the exact spot. I never was overly puffed up like some folks over bein' born in Indiany, fur while she has sent out some cute writers, it don't foller that every Indianyan is smart any more than it follers that every man in Californy is a millionaire because there's a hull row of them on Orange Grove street in Pasadena. No siree; I've seen men livin' right in Indiany that didn't effect the community they lived in any more than the yeller hounds they hunted with (of course, there's shinin' exceptions, but that's fur others to tell of me.) All I kin learn about my early history is mostly hearsay, but when it comes to that I've only got my folks's word fur it that I'm Hiram Harrison at all. It seems durin' the first few years of my life I staid

purty close to my mother's skirts an' the family dinner pot; said pot hangin' from a hook over a big fireplace. In fact, my first an' earliest recollections is of seein' my mother throw into that pot fur the family dinner a slab of side pork nearly two foot long (sich a hunk would make a five-er look like thirty cents in Californy nowadays) an' a half a bushel of split cabbage heads, not to mention a peck of peeled pertaters an' sich. Homely fare, mebby, that biled dinner style, but frum the number of bright men an' wimmen the old state has sent out, it must a bin middlin' good brain food.

"'As I said before, I staid purty close to home fur awhile, it bein' dangerous fur children to venture very far frum home till they was stout enough to pull their legs out of the mud. When I was tall enough to sink into the mud a couple of feet an' still have my head stickin' out, my folks let me run, an' frum all accounts I made up fur lost time. I went to school winters, an' at the age of ten I spoke "The boy stood on the burnin' deck," at a school exhibition, an' hollered so loud, an' throwed so much reelism into it that my

father, who had never heard tell of the pome before, was scairt, an' when I yelled out, "My father, must I stay?" he yelled back at me: "No, you fool; jump out of the winder er anything, if it's a hurtin' you like that."

" 'Things went on swimmin' till I was about twenty-two, when I got in love an' wan't worth shucks fur a couple of years. Her folks said funny things 'bout me, an' tho't she orter look higher, an' marry a pill peddler. Then my folks wanted me to marry a girl who was ugly enough to scare her own ma, because her pap was goin' to give her two of most everythin'—cow an' calf, an' horse an' colt, an' hen an' chickens, not to mention a feather bed, an' a sunrise quilt, an' two split-bottomed rockin' cheers he made hisself. I hain't denyin's I was tempted, but I weighed Pheba's purty face agin the goods an' chattels, married her, an' sailed fur Nebrasky in a prairie schooner next day, where we lived in peace an' contentment till the "doin' Californy" fever struck the Middle West in the airly nineteen hundreds an' some. Then, like many another, we left our winter quarters around the base burner an' went to

Californy to wear overcoats an' goosehide till we got used to their open-air system of heatin' houses. After passin' that stage in safety, we found the country was all 'twas cracked up to be an' concludin' to stay, bought a peach of a house out Westlake way in Los Angeles, an' a beach house on the ocean. 'Twas durin' this trip to Californy that the famous letters to the Farmers' Guide was wrote and—' Jest at this pint I heard your Uncle's step, an' puttin' the writin' away in a hurry, I was calmly fixin' my hair in front of the glass when he entered.

"The next mornin' Hiram, who was hisself agin an' more, too, was ready fur the sights. 'What air yer main attrachuns here?' he asked of another man, who seemed to be at home on the island, an' the man said: 'Our island draws folks frum all over the world. Glass-bottomed boats, tuny fishin' an' mountain-goat huntin' is a trio hard to beat, an' orter make you hog-and-homily fellers who hain't see a landscape fur years, fur the cornfields, open yer eyes.'

"Hiram got red in the face, fer he's tender 'bout Nebraska yet, an' he says: 'I guess if we hadn't had any other way of makin' a livin'

back there but goin' into the 'tourist show' bizness we could a showed 'em something besides cornfields, too. A mud-cat, fresh caught from the Blue, beats yer tunified an' berbercued fish all holler. An' as fur yer glass-bottomed boats, I've see Salt Crick froze over so clear you could see every old bootleg an' oyster can as plain as day. An' if Nebraska had a saved her million or two buffaloes fur tourists to hunt, this huntin' billy goats would a bin small pertaters beside it.'

"Fearin' the talk would get personal I called Hiram's attention to the men who were mountin' their horses to go on a mountain goat hunt, an' your Uncle says, gloomy like: ' 'Twill be throwed in my teeth fer years that I never shot any goat game out here,' an' 'twas all I could do to keep him frum hirin' an' mountin' one of them fiery animals that had been trained, so I was told, to leap cricks an' slide down mountains when they was huntin' game. It makes your Uncle mad as a hornet to say so, but if he didn't hang onto the horn of his saddle he would fall off an old cow, an' 'twas almost certain death to risk him on them hired horses.

After considerable coaxin' an' arguin' he give in an' was thinkin' he would compromise things by buyin' one of them whiskered goat heads he see fur sale an' puttin' it in his den, an' never let on but what he shot it, unless someone pinned him down to the truth. But hearin' the men tell about the goats they had shot, when they was smokin' in the office of the hotel in the evenin', made your Uncle wild to go goat huntin'.

"To get his mind off it I proposed we take our lunch an' go out into the wild as fur as we could an' spend the day, all by ourselves. We went by team as fur as we could an' then we clim up a steep hill a ways further, where we enjoyed a quiet time till jest before it was time to go home. When Hiram was layin' on his back lookin' up the mountain side at nuthin' in particular he sees somethin' wigglin' in amongst a clump of trees. 'What fur critter is that, Pheba?' says your Uncle, squintin' real interested at the wigglin' thing. Then it moved a little faster, an' Hiram sat up real excited, an says: 'Gee whiz! if it hain't the hind legs an' tail of one of them horned an' whiskered

mountain goats, an' me without a firearm about me. My luck eggsactly. But,' says he, lookin' determined, 'I'll have that goat er my name hain't Hiram Harrison, Esquire. Necessity is the mother an' father of new inventions, an' it's up to me to figger out some way of capturin' that animal fate has throwed in my way.'

" 'The very idee!' says he, lookin' wild, he was so excited. 'I'll ketch the critter alive an' take him down an' show him to them blowin' fellers at the tavern, an' mebby ship him back home with us. Then them correspondents to all the papers will flash the news by wireless telegraphin' all over the country. Won't Herman's folks open their eyes when the news comes out in big headlines tellin' how their Uncle, alone an' single-handed, captured one of them ferocious mountain goats with horns on him like a Texas steer, an' whiskers like a Pop candidate fur County Sheriff!'

" 'You must be crazy, Hiram,' says I, but he broke out agin sayin': 'I've see it done hundreds of times, that slippin' up an' grabbin' a sheep by the hind legs, an' landin' him on the shearin' boards before said sheep could say

Jack Robinson.' 'But this is a goat an—' 'Goat nothin',' says he, stoppin' my speech agin. 'What's a goat, anyway, but a exaggerated sheep, with a lot of frills in the way of whiskers an' things grafted onto him a la Burbank style? My plan is to slip up an' grab him by the legs as he stands there with his head hid in the brush, an' bind him fast with the straps frum our lunch basket.'

" 'Twas with many misgivin's I saw your Uncle creep up that steep mountain side an' grab that onsuspectin' critter by the hind legs. The goat let out one awful blat of terror at the rear attack, an' opened up the first round by kickin' Hiram with both them hind legs, flat in the stumich, an' nearly made him lose his holt. But your Uncle was gritty, an' held on fur dear life, an' a fiercer fight I never see. When the fight was at its height, an' the twigs was crackin', an' the dust a flyin' an' Hiram talkin', an' the goat a blattin', something seemed to give 'way, an' the next thing I knowed the goat an' Hiram was shootin' like lightnin' (Hiram still hangin' onto the goat) down that steep mountain side. With fear an'

tremblin' I rushed after them an' saw 'em land at the bottom in front of a little white tent I hadn't see before. A feller, who looked about half gone with the janders, er somethin', hearin' the crash, came rushin' out, an' 'most astonished to see Hiram half ridin', half carryin' that goat down the mountain side at sich a rapid pace, said: 'You villain, what in the Sam Hill air ye tryin' to murder my three-pint Nanny for?'

" 'Yer three-pint granny!'" yelled back your Uncle, nearly beside hisself. 'Stand there like a fool when a man's nearly killed all over at yer door, 'thout offerin' to bring out any of yer first aids to the injered.' When the man see his goat wan't killed, an' your Uncle was only banged up some, he got tickled at somethin' an 'most died a laughin'. That made Hiram madder than ever, an' it didn't improve his temper any when he looked 'round an' see the three-pint Nanny a quietin' her nerves by chawin' up his new straw hat; he up an' hove a big rock at her, an' started the fuss all over, an' if the stage hadn't come along an' hurried

"'Make a fool of yerself laffin', says he, 'but if I ever hear of you whimperin' a word 'bout this goat episode I'll sue you fur a divorce an' separate maintenence afore I'm a day older.'"

us aboard, it's more than likely they'd a fit each other.

"That night, as I lay in bed watchin' Hiram bathe his jints, an' bruises, in arnica an' liniment, I got a spell of laughin', an' I laffed till I most shook the bed down, an' could hardly git stopped. 'What ails ye, anyhow?' growled your Uncle, peerin' at me over his specks, an' I answered as well as I could between laughs: 'Talk about your movin' pictures, if some of them movin'-picture men could a got you an' that goat, rollin' over each other to see which could git to the bottom first, his fortune would a bin made.' Then I laffed more, an' your Uncle, lookin' severe, says: 'Make a fool of yerself by laffin' all you want to, but I'll tell you here an' now, that if I ever hear of your whimperin' a word about this goat episode I'll sue you fur divorce an' separate mentenence before I'm a day older, er my name hain't Hiram Harrison.'"

The Harrisons Go in for Society and Buy a Town House and a Beach House on the Ocean — Everything Lovely but Their English.

## AT WESTLAKE HOME

"I NEVER was so surprised in all my life, Mandy," said Aunt Pheba Harrison, "as I was that day in Los Angeles, when your Uncle come walkin' into our room at the hotel an' said: 'If nothin' else will do you, Pheba, but buyin' one of them houses out Westlake way, I reckon we might 'bout as well let the agent take us out an' look at some of them this afternoon.'

"Honestly, Mandy, if Hiram Harrison had a slapped me in the face I wouldn't bin a bit more surprised than I was at him takin' this sudden notion, an' while I was awfully tickled, I never let on, an' got ready jest as if 'twas what I'd bin expectin' all along.

"The first house the agent showed us was big an' old an' gloomy, an' the woman who owned it answered to the same description, an' Hiram 'lowed he'd have the jim-jams livin' in

sich a place, an' said he'd ruther live in a tent. We looked at a lot more, but if Hiram liked 'em I didn't, an' vice versa. Somethin' was wrong with all on 'em till he showed us a nine-room bungalow that looked real homelike an' cozy an' not too big to do the housework with one hired girl. It struck both our fancies all at once, altho Hiram found objections, of course, an' run things down, thinkin' he'd get it cheaper by talkin' agin it. When the agent called his 'tention to the new style of beamed over ceilin's he said: 'New nothin'; they had them things in the log houses back in Indiany as long back as I kin reckalect, not to mention them ridge poles we see in them sod houses in the airly days of Nebraska. You'll have to get up somethin' a little moderner, young man, an' a little more up-to-datish than them beamed-over ceilin's, if you want me to call 'em new. Them sod houses had winder seats, too; had to have 'em whether or no, bein's the wall was nearly two feet thick. Never thot of braggin' an' blowin' 'bout 'em bein' purty, tho.'

"Then the agent showed us what I call a

wonderful invention in the shape of a disappearin' bed, but Hiram wan't a bit surprised, an' said: 'Think you've got me now, don't you? But you hain't. See more disappearin' beds in my day than you could shake a stick at, but they disappeared under the big family bed, an' they called 'em trundle beds in them days; same idee, tho. Sometimes when visitors would come unexpectedly of a mornin' that bed would disappear so quick mebby the woman would forget to extract more than half the children, an' frum the way they'd yell when they found themselves prisoners, one who heard 'em an' didn't understan' the situation would think murder was bein' done.'

"Failin' to impress your Uncle with the disappearin' bed the agent said: 'The billiard room an' the servant's room an' the den are on the second floor;' an' as the agent moved toward the stairway Hiram, actin' real excited, said: 'Stop where you be; I don't pertend to be any better than my nabers, but I'll swan if I'm goin' to make any hired girl of ourn sleep up there all alone with a den of wild ani-

mals, altho all the wild animals we have to stock a den with is the tabby cat an' ole Shep.

"'But go on,' says he, seein' I looked kind of disappointed. 'I see you're bound to take up with all them silly, smart-set fads, so if you must keep a den of wild critters to be in it out Westlake way, I reckon I kin scare up a wolf an' prairie dog an' mebby one of them Teddy bears to add to the family menagary. If some swell society leader was to make a roof garden atop of the house, fur the family cow, an' send 'er up in a elevator, I reckon there'd be plenty to ape after her.'

"When Hiram see the inhabitants of the den was nothin' worse than the hides an' horns of wild animals, together with a collection of pipes an' relics an' sich, he was most tickled to death.

"'A sensibler fad never existed,' said he; 'them buffalo robes an' horns I've bin savin' so long will jest be the thing, an' I'll bring a lot of them fresh corncob pipes, along with them Injun relics, back with me frum Nebraska. Then when I give a smokin—' 'Smoker, you mean,' says I. 'Well, smoker, then,' says he,

'I'll tell some harrowin' tales 'bout how I hunted buffalo an' fit Injuns on the plains an' got them relics an' hides an' horns; make 'em open their eyes sure an' make that rabbit coursin' huntin' we see at the Country Club look like thirty cents.'

" 'Gee, but this is great,' he continued, surveying the den with satisfaction. 'Not a tidy er lace curtain in sight. It's a place I've dreamt of but never expected to see. When wimmen go to sniffin' the air in this corner of the house an' sayin' they believe they smell smoke, I'll jest tell 'em to smell away er stay out, jest as they please.'

" 'The breakfast room is quaint,' said the agent, an' Hiram asked him how big the lot was, sayin': ' 'Twill only be a matter of time till she'll have to have a supper room an' a dinner room, so I want to be sure there's room to build 'em, as I see it's comin'. Crazy idee, tho.

" 'I reckon there's a garbage on the place?' he asked.

" 'A what?' said the agent.

" 'A place to put our automobile,' says your Uncle, as big as you please.

"O, sure, Mr. Harrison,' says the agent, holdin' his hat up over his mouth to keep us frum seein' him laffin'. After a good deal of haglin' on Hiram's part we bought the place fur ten thousand dollars, an' moved in to see what furniture would be best brought out frum Nebraska. As it come on toward summer, most of our nabors out Westlake way commenced to talk about goin' to them cottages down to the beach. It seemed to worry Hiram; as fur me, I ain't one of the beachy kind, bein's I ain't overly fond of fleas an' sand. Hiram said the cook put on airs over us frum the day she found out we didn't calcalate to go. Thinkin' to make Hiram feel better, fur he seemed to think he was disgraced not ownin' a house down to one of them beaches, I said: 'I might do like lots of the other women out here do—go an' board an' have you come down at the week's end over Sunday;' but he got as mad as a hornet, an' said: 'Other wimmen nothin'. It's a shame the way these Californy wimmen go gallopin' round to them resorts all summer leavin' their

men at home to water the yard an' feed the chickens, an' get into dyspepsia an' all kinds of trouble.'

"'They say it's the climate,' said I, an' he growled back: 'If a woman kin stay at home all summer in Nebraska, where the cyclones are doin' a land office bizness, an' the lightnin' is strikin' all over creation, she kin do the same out here. It's bin an unwritten law back there ever sence the country was settled up that April Fool's Day, an' Decoration Day, an' the Fourth of July celebration was dissapation enough fur any woman. If a woman back there was to go hikin' off to some pleasure resort every summer, 'thout the aid an' consent of her husband, she'd be apt to come home some fall an' find some other female perambulatin' 'round her hearthstone, who'd tell her she'd forfeited her homestid right by bein' off her claim too long, an' like as not show her a paper signed by the County Judge which made the gaddin' woman an ex-wife No. 1.'

"'I've known cases where the gaddin' wife would be tickled to death nearly,' says I, but your Uncle never answered me, an' after starin'

out of the winder awhile he said: 'But I see you're bound to go, so the only thing fur me to do is to buy us a beach house. But I'll give you fair warnin' tho, I hain't a goin' to stay at home with that homely cook; seems to me you couldn't a found a homelier critter if you'd a got out a search warrant an' hunted all over Salt Lake City. Homeliest women there, individually an' collectively, I ever laid eyes on. Them ole Mormon fellars must a had the courage of their convictions to face sich an ugly, job-lot, rummage-sale gang of wives three times a day at meal time. 'Twould a took my appetite. But to get back to the beach question; I hain't a goin' to stay at home an' mosey 'round the house waterin' the yard, an' feedin' chickens, so I've concluded you kin take that prize-beauty cook, an' the chickens an' things, an' I'll load you an' your trunks an' traps, an' things, onto a dray, an' you kin go overland to the beach; 'twill be the cheapest way to do.

"'If you are a caterin' to society so you won't have me 'round only on the week's-end days, I kin jine one of them men's clubs so as I won't be lonesome the middle-week days.

'Twould be the proper thing to do, anyway, seein' as how I've writ two letters to the papers, an' had a piece of poetry printed and kin play lawn tennis, an' bin massaged twice. If we are goin' in fur this society stunt, Pheba, it's up to you to get citified an' take them physical-culture doin's an' git straight front waisted an' graceful, too; we'll have to brush up a little on our—' 'Language,' says I, interruptin' him. 'I noticed them society folks at Herman's didn't say "hain't." 'That's so,' says he, 'an' hain't you noticed I hain't said "hain't" fur quite a spell. That's one reason I bought out here instid of on Orange Grove Street in Pasadena; they say if you git your "theses" an' "thoses" mixed over there 'twill put you out of runnin' with the Smart Set entirely. Then you'd hate to set around an' hear the other wimmen talkin' French, an' you not understan' it.' 'French ain't a hurtin' me,' says I, 'it's my English. I guess their French is mostly like that Pasadena woman's Herman's wife was a tellin' me about. Herself an' all her friends thought she was a fine French languagist, an' when she went into a restaurant in Paris the

only way she could make the French waiter understand she wanted bread an' butter was a p'intin' to it an' then p'intin' to her mouth.'

" 'Well, I wish you could play the banjo er the pianer er somethin',' says your Uncle, an' I said: ' 'Tain't fashionable to play the piano in company any more, less you are a expert; other wimmen who ain't expert piano players have pianolas.'

" 'Other wimmen nothin',' says he' thinkin' of the cost. 'Throwin' that other wimmen bizness up to us has bin the undoin' of men ever sense there was men to undo. Get your old pianola an' be done with it. I've a notion to take a few lessons on the fiddle myself. I'll bet I kin play "Old Dan Tucker" an' "Money Musk" now till they can't keep their feet still. 'Twill be somethin' novel to have fiddlin' music at my smoker.

" 'Purty expensive bizness, this goin' into society, but I got a offer of ten thousand more yesterday fur the farm, so I guess I kin stand it, pianola, fiddlin' lessons, sendin' out straight laundry, hired girl, beach an' all.' "